

The University of Chicago

ISAIAH AND THE NATURE CULTS

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1936

By
WILLIS WILLIARD FISHER

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ABBREVIATIONS

American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures - AJSL

Annual of American Schools of Oriental Research - AASOR

Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research - BASOR

Der Alte Orient - AO

Jewish Quarterly Review - JQR

Journal of Biblical Literature - JBL

Journal of Religion - JR

Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement - PEFQS

Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft - ZATW

Zeitschrift des Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft - ZDMG



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CHAPTER IV

NATURE CULT SYMBOLISM AND PRACTICES REFERRED TO IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

(a) The Wounding and Death of the God

The element of suffering and death by wounds was an essential feature in the nature religions.¹ Tammuz was frequently spoken of as "the smitten one," "the one without strength,"² "the fettered one," and the "ensnared one"³ in the literature of Babylonia, and Osiris was likewise dealt with in Egyptian literature.⁴ All the nature religions represented the god to have been smitten down in the flower of his manhood.⁵

Similarly, in Isaiah 1:5-6 the prophet spoke of Judah as the smitten and wounded one.

Why will ye be smitten [יָדָנָה] more [that] ye add rebellion? The whole head is wounded [יָדָנָה] and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no strength [vitality] [יָדָנָה] in it. Bruise [יָדָנָה] and blow [יָדָנָה] and fresh smiting [יָדָנָה]. They have not been pressed out, nor bound up [יָדָנָה], nor made soft with oil!

¹Cf. pp. 20-21 above. (This reference is to the complete dissertation, which is to be found only in the University of Chicago Library.)

²H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns and Prayers to the God Dumu-zi (Munich: Rudolf Merkel, 1913), pp. 54, 56, 61-62; F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns (New York: Columbia University Press, 1908), p. 18; J. D. Prince, "Hymn to Tammuz," AJSL, XXVII (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1911), 84-89.

³H. Radau, op. cit., pp. 59-61; G. A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible (5th ed.; Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union, 1927), pp. 459-460.

⁴J. H. Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 32.

⁵H. Radau, op. cit., pp. 20-23, 45; Vanderburgh, op. cit., pp. 16-18: "lion of perfect strength"; J. D. Prince, op. cit., pp. 84-85: "the mighty one," "the youthful one." S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1919), p. 288: "the sturdy one."

The words used are those with definite fertility cult associations and those frequently used to indicate the loss of fertility. נָפַח (with the root נִח) has definite cult associations. The word occurs in Zechariah 13:6: "the prophetic wounds" received in "the house of my lovers." Its use in Micah 1:9, in a passage full of fertility cult imagery¹ and doubtless referring to the same historic situation as the above Isaiah verses, practically guarantees its usage here as a reference to Judah under the figure of the smitten deity. While this root is not used in the Ras Shamra literature, yet יָנַח , meaning "to smite, strike through, wound" is found in both the Babylonian and Ras Shamra ritual² and also in Isaiah 30:26, where it parallels נָפַח³

¹Cf. W. C. Graham, "Some Suggestions toward the Interpretation of Micah 1:10-16," *AJS*, XLVII (1931), 237-258. Cf. also Jer. 30:12 f; 15:18; Prov. 20:30; Nah. 3:19. The root נָסַח is very frequently used in the Old Testament of the removal or cessation of fertility. Cf., for instance, Hag. 2:17; Hos. 6:1; 9:16; Amos 4:9; Psa. 105:33. Several passages (Micah 4:14; Lam. 3:29-30; Job 16:10) parallel the ritual smiting of the king in the New Year festival at Babylon in order to insure good fortune for the coming year. Cf. F. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens* (6th ed.; Paris: E. Leroux, 1921), pp. 144-145, lines 415-452, especially lines 419, 449-452. It is also used in Cant. 5:7. Further references to the smiting of God are: Isa. 5:25; 9:12; 30:26; 53:4; Jer. 6:7.

²Cf. Thureau-Dangin, ibid., Fete of the New Year at Babylon, pp. 144-145, lines 419, 426, 449. Such ritual smiting of the king was for the welfare of the country. In Syria, XII (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1931), "Un Poeme Phenicien de Ras Shamra" by C. Virolleaud, msh is used of Ba'al's smiting on the shoulder and yoke, apparently, of the leaders (rbm): Pl. XLII, Col. V, lines 2 and 3. See also Syria, XIII, Pl. XXV, Col. II, line 24. Cf. J. D. Prince, "Hymn to Tammuz", AJSL, XXVII, 87, line 10; also p. 89, line 5, and equation of NAM-DA-AN-SI-IG with SIG (PA) and mahasu, "to smite." Word used five times in five lines on p. 89. R. W. Rogers, Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament (2nd ed.; Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press, 1926), p. 167, line 40; F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 18. In the Old Testament this word has its ritual association in Job 26:12, "the piercing of Rahab," probably a reference to the Tiamat legend. Psa. 110:5 parallels the smiting of the king, here accomplished by Yahweh, of the Babylonian New Year Fete. It is used similarly in Job 5:18 and Deut. 32:39. It is used of Yahweh's smiting his foes: Psa. 68:22; Hab. 3:13; Deut. 33:11.

³ The date of this passage has nothing to do with the point of its linkage with Ras Shamra and Babylonian ritual and its witness to Hebrew parallel use of the roots, נכח and יחזק.

and שָׁבַר ,¹ while חָבַשׁ ,² also used in the above quoted passage, parallels אָרַר .³ Here in the concluding verse of the passage Isaiah 30:18-26 is found נָחַח definitely associated with other cult words in a passage dealing with Yahweh's promise of material prosperity and linked to both Ras Shamra and Babylonian ritual with the very root they use: נחח .

While it is perfectly obvious that the root נחח is used frequently in the Old Testament in a non-technical sense, Isaiah's tendency to use cult imagery, manifested conclusively in other passages, creates the presumption that he is doing so here, especially in view of its cult association and the fact that, out of 13 other occurrences of the root in Isaiah, ten are used in a figurative sense.⁴

¹This word is used in connection with mahasu in a passage relating that Ishtar smote Tammuz and caused his death. Cf. F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 18: "tam-ha-si-su-ma kap-pa-su tal-te-bir" [thou didst smite him and break his pinions]. The same root is used of "reeds not broken," Thureau-Dangin, Rituels accadiens, New Year Fete at Babylon, p. 145, line 455. In the Ras Shamra ritual, Sps cries out to Mot: "Who has broken the sceptre of your sovereignty," using this root; cf. C. Virolleaud, "Un Poème Phénicien de Ras Shamra," Syria, XII, Pl. XLIII, Col. VI, line 29. This word parallels נחח and נחח in Isaiah 30:26. Usage in Lam. 2:11, 13; Jer. 8:11, 21; 14:17; 30:12; Amos 6:6 implies a cultic significance. The word נחח (cf. Isa. 37:3 and Hosea 13:13) still further indicates the connection of this root with the fertility cultus.

²This word also parallels אָרַר in Hosea 6:1; Psa. 147:3; Job 5:18. Cultic connections seem implied in Ezek. 24:17; 34:4; Lev. 8:13; Exod. 29:9. Ezek. 24:17 would link it with mourning customs. See also Isa. 3:7.

³God's gift of fertility to Abimelech and his wives is called "healing": Gen. 20:17; Yahweh is the healer of Israel in Hos. 6:1; 7:1; 11:3-4, where the usage is definitely connected with the nature cults. Cf. W. W. F. Baudissin, Adonis und Eshmun (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1911) p. 310 ff; H. G. May, "Fertility Cult in Hosea," AJSL, XLVIII (1932), 3-5. Cf. also Isaiah 53:5, healing by vicarious smiting. The following passages imply a cult healing: Jer. 3:22; 6:14; 8:22; 8:11, 22; Isa. 6:10; 19:22; 57:18-19; Psa. 60:4-5; Ezek. 34:4; Zech. 11:16. Tammuz is frequently called "the healer"; e.g., S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 287; Tammuz and Ishtar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 34. See later section entitled "The Healer."

⁴Figurative use: Isa. 5:25; 9:12; 11:4; 11:15; 27:7; 30:26. Mixed figurative and literal use: 10:20, 24; 14:29; 30:31. Literal use: 10:26; 14:6; 37:26.

וַיַּדְּ, ¹ הַרְבֵּה, ² and יָנָה ³ are also used definitely in connection with cult wounding. דָּוָה ⁴ is another word apparently indicating that the figures of this passage are drawn from the nature cult pattern.

Isaiah 3:14-15 apparently is related in its terms and ideas to the nature cults:

¹This word is used of symbolic wounds in I Kgs. 20:37. Cant. 5:7 uses the word parallel with הָרַב. For the relation of Canticles to the Tammuz cult, cf. T. J. Meek, "Canticles and the Tammuz Cult," *AJSL*, XXXIX, 1 ff. Deut. 23:2 uses the word of the ritual wounding, referred to in Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, 11, and in Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens*, p. 114, l. 5; p. 115, l. 7. Prov. 27:6 recalls the ritual wounding of Zech. 13:6. Cf. also Gen. 4:23; Prov. 23:29; Job 9:17.

²This interesting word has the root meaning "to tie magical knots." It also has its connection with necromancy opposed in Deut. 18:11, and Psalms. 58:6 uses the word to refer to serpent-charmers. Connection of serpent is well attested: cf. p. 22, note 2 above. Cf. also Prov. 20:30; Psalm. 38:6. It is also interesting to note the Assyrian *ubburu*, "to bind", "ban (of spells)" and *šbrū*, "friend."

³This word, usually translated "sickness", interestingly enough occurs most frequently parallel with "wounding", as in II Kgs. 8:29; Jer. 6:7; 10:19; 14:17; Isa. 53:4; Nah. 3:19; Mic. 6:13; Hos. 5:13. It is seldom used where it must clearly refer to disease, as in Deut. 28:59-61. Cant. 2:5 and 5:8 show its cultic use, stating: "I am sick [smitten] with love." In Isa. 38:1, 9 and in II Kgs. 20:1, the word may record an actual case of ritual wounding - see following discussion of Isa. 38:9-20: "An Adapted Liturgy of the Dying God." In Isa. 1:5-6 the idea of wounding fits the context far better than sickness, p. 30.

⁴Isa. 1:5 states: "The whole head is wounded [lit., for wounding] and the whole heart faint." It is followed by the statement, often thought to be a gloss: "From the sole of the foot to the head there is no דָּוָה in it." Whether it be a gloss or not (The Old Latin omits the phrase: "There is no דָּוָה in it"; both the LXX and Vulgate add it), it rightly explains the meaning of the sickness and faintness as being "There remains no 'strength'--'virility', 'elan vital' ['soundness' or 'health' hardly expresses the meaning]." When we remember that the dying god was "the one without strength", this translation becomes doubly attractive in view of the other cultic words used in this passage. This is further enhanced by the fact that "strength" or "power" will fit most of the other occurrences of the word in the Old Testament better than the words: "men" or "soundness". Cf. Psalm. 38:4, 8; Deut. 2:34; 3:6. The root דָּוָה is also used in Cant. 5:2 and 6:9 where it evidently means pristine perfection and vigor.

Yahweh has come in judgment with the elders of his people
and its princes: 'Ye indeed have consumed the vineyard;
plunder of the poor [is] in your houses. What [is it] to you
[that] ye crush [יִצְחָק] my people, and the faces of the
poor ye grind [יִדְבֹק]?

The root $\int \pi \delta^1$ which here parallels $\lambda \gamma \tau$, is twice used in the Ras Shamra ritual. Once Mot brings Alein-Ba'al to an end through the ritual crushing, burning, and scattering of the grain.² 'Anat reciprocates this by removing the spell from Alein by speaking the same ritual crushing over Mot, who is thus conquered.³ Here Isaiah plainly borrows the figure when he says the rulers are grinding the poor, annihilating them, putting a curse on them through their own ritualistic practices dominated by the motive of materialistic prosperity.⁴

The above passages are clear examples of the acceptance of the nature-cult thought-pattern by Isaiah and its adaptation to prophetic uses. A similar borrowing from the nature religions is shown in the healing function of Yahweh. Judah is smitten of Yahweh and ought to know the real source of wounding and return

¹Cf. Virolleaud, "Un Poème Phénicien de Ras Shamra," Syria, XII, Pl. XXXIX, Col. II, line 34; Pl. XLII, Col. V, line 15. Cf. Old Testament usage in Isa. 47:2; Judg. 16:21; Deut. 9:21; Exod. 32:20; Num. 11:8; Job 31:10.

²Cf. Syria, XII, Pl. XLII, Col. V, line 15.

³Cf. Syria, XII, Pl. XXXIX, Col. II, line 34. Also W. C. Graham, "Recent Light on the Cultural Origins of the Hebrews," Journal of Religion, XIV (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 321-322.

⁴The tacit assumption of this statement is that the rulers are the central figures in the cultus, whose ritual acts are supposed to bring prosperity. This supports the thesis that the dynastic kingship in Judah was felt to have a divine character and that it was the basis of the nation's prosperity, as W. C. Graham "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis," AJS, L, 211-213 holds, and contra conclusions of C. R. North: "The Religious Aspects of the Hebrew Kingship," ZATW, L (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1932), 31-38, especially 36 f. See also the important article of A. R. Johnson, "The Role of the King in the Jerusalem Cultus" in S. H. Hooke, The Labyrinth (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1935), pp. 73-111.

to him,¹ even as Tammuz returned to Ishtar who smote him.² As she was responsible for his return in health,³ so will Yahweh be responsible for the return of Judah to health and prosperity,⁴ if it comes about.

From the above Isaianic passages we turn now to the consideration of a passage (Isaiah 38:9-20) included in the present book of Isaiah and stated to have been the writing of Hezekiah. Since our purpose is to establish the thesis that the nature-cults were dominantly significant in the times of Isaiah and to discover the character of the religion against which he protested, such a piece of literature may prove very pertinent:

9. Writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, on account of his being sick [weak, wounded], when he revived from his sickness [wounding].

10. I said, In the prime of my days, I will go; to the gates of Sheol I am appointed the rest of my years.

11. I said, I shall not see Yahweh in the land of the living, nor shall I see man again with the inhabitants of the world.

12. My posterity is cut off and removed [לִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה]⁵ from me, as the bridal-pavilion of my Shepherd [אֶת־רֹעִי],⁶ I have rolled up my life; as a weaver, from the thrum he cuts me off. [In the space of time] from day unto night thou shalt make me sound.

13. I am made level [laid out] until morning;⁷

¹Isa. 1:5-6; 9:12. See also Isa. 27:7; 30:26.

²Cf., e.g., S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 293, lines 15-17; p. 294, lines 35-38; and p. 295. See also his Mythology of All Races (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1931), V, 256.

³Cf. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, pp. 287-288.

⁴Isa. 3:7-8; 6:10. See also Isa. 19:22; 30:26.

⁵ לִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה : Ezek. 23:18, 29; Lev. 20:18; Isa. 24:11.

⁶ אֶת־רֹעִי : II Sam. 16:22; Psalms. 19:5; Joel 2:16; Isa. 16:5; Zech. 12:7; I Sam. 2:22; cf. also Ezek. 23:1-49; Psalms. 23:1; Gen. 49:24; Psalms. 80:2. Tammuz as shepherd is common.

⁷In the Greek, "I am given up until morning."

As a lion [לִיָּאֵרִי],¹ so he has broken [שָׁבַר] ² all my bones. [In the space of time] from day unto night thou shalt make me sound.

14. As a swallow³ I mutter [צִצְצָא];⁴ I moan [אֶהְרָג]⁵ as a dove [דֹּבָה].⁶ My eyes are directed to the height [שָׁמַיִם]! ⁷ O Yahweh, distress is mine! Be my surety!

15. What shall I say? He has both spoken to me and has done! I will go in procession all my years on account of the bitterness of my life!

16. O my Lord [Adon], on account of these [things] they live; and for all among them is the life of my spirit. [Therefore] thou shalt restore me and shalt make me revive.

17. Behold, for prosperity, bitterness to me [was] bitter; But thou hast loved my soul from the pit of destruction, For thou hast put behind my back all my sins.

18. For Sheol doth not give thanks to thee, nor Mot

¹ לִיָּאֵרִי : II Sam. 23:20; Hos. 11:10. Ishtar was often represented as a lion or leopard. Cf. e.g., M. I. Hussey, "Some Sumero-Babylonian Hymns," *AJSL*, XXIII, 172: "a leopard going in search of a lamb as prey art thou. A lion roving about the field art thou!" Cf. *Syria*, XII, Pl. XXXIX, line 20 where apparently Mot is designated as a "murdering lion": (šhl) and compare Hos. 5:14; 13:7. Also see J. G. Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* (2nd ed.; London, MacMillan and Company, Ltd., 1907), pp. 91-104. W. F. Albright, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (Baltimore, Md.: W. F. Albright, editor), No. 31, pp. 6-8; No. 39, p. 7. S. H. Langdon, *Mythology of All Races*, V, pp. 31-32, 47; C. Vellay, *Le Culte et les Fêtes d'Adonis-Thammouz* (Paris: Leroux, 1904), pp. 109-110. P. Dhorme, *Choix de Textes Religieux Assyriens et Babyloniens* (Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie., 1907), p. 366, lines 6-7; F. A. Vanderburgh, *Sumerian Hymns*, p. 18: "Tammuz - lion of perfect strength." See also II Sam. 1:23; Cant. 4:8; Isa. 29:1-2, 7; 33:7. Gen. 49:9.

² שָׁבַר : Isa. 42:3. Comp. F. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens*, p. 145. Also see *Syria*, XII, Pl. XLIII, line 29. Also Isa. 14:25; 30:26.

³ "Crane",--not suitable; probably a gloss.

⁴ צִצְצָא : Cf. Isa. 29:4; 10:14; 8:19.

⁵ אֶהְרָג : Isa. 8:19; 16:7; 59:11; Jer. 48:31.

⁶ דֹּבָה : Cf. Cant. 1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2; 6:9; Psal. 56:1. Nah. 2:8; Isa. 59:11.

⁷ שָׁמַיִם : Cf. *Syria*, XIII, Pl. XXVII, line 85; Pl. XXVI, line 19. Root in Isa. 14:13 parallel to [שָׁמַיִם]; Isa. 37:24; 32:15; Mic. 6:6; Isa. 57:15; Ezek. 17:23; 20:40.

praise thee. Those going down [ירדו]¹ to the Pit do not hope in thy faithfulness.

19. He who is living, who is living [renders] thy praise as I do this day; the father to sons [is] the one causing to know thy faithfulness.

20. Yahweh [is the one] to deliver me. And my stringed instruments shall we [probably originally "I"] play all the days of our [perhaps, originally "my"] life at Yahweh's house.

Although the text of this passage is doubtless corrupt and the meaning in places is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at exactly, the affinities of this literature with the nature-cult literature are too many to be ignored. The following parallels are to be noted: (1) The individual represents his death to have overtaken him in the prime of life (vs. 10). The dying god is everywhere represented as cut down in the flower of his manhood.² (2) He is consigned to Sheol for the rest of his years without hope of return (vss. 10-11). Tammuz was so doomed until Ishtar appeared to beg his release.³ (3) His posterity is cut off and removed as the bridal-pavilion⁴ of his Shepherd (vs. 12).⁵ (4) He is speedily to be healed,--within

¹ ירדו : Used many times of descent to Sheol: Isa. 14:19; 5:14; Num. 16:30, 33; Judg. 11:37; Ezek. 31:15, 17; 32:19, 21, 27; Job 7:9; 17:16; 33:24; Psa. 22:30; 28:1; 30:4, 10; 115:17; Prov. 5:5.

²Cf. H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns to the God Dumu-zi, pp. 45, 56; Frazer, op. cit., pp. 220-221.

³R. W. Rogers, op. cit., p. 180 f.

⁴Cf. use of 𒌷𒍪𒌷 thus in II Sam. 16:22. Compare also Psa. 19:5; Joel 2:16. F. A. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Liturgies," AJSL, XXVII, 313 f. where the god's removal from his fertilizing function is the source of lament. The dying god was frequently called Shepherd. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Liturgies," AJSL, XXVII, 316-317; Frazer, op. cit., pp. 220-221.

⁵Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Liturgies," AJSL, XXVII, 313, 316-317. H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns to the God Dumu-zi, pp. 33, 35-39, 59. F. Martin, Religieux Textes Assyro-Babyloniens (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1903), pp. 61-63; Rogers, op. cit., pp. 181, 183, 250; Frazer, op. cit., pp. 220-221.

a day's time, apparently (vss. 12-13).¹ (5) The smiter is compared to a lion as was Ishtar in smiting Tammuz (vs. 13).² (6) The smitten one "moans as the dove" (vs. 14).³ (7) He looks to the height (𐤓𐤓𐤕) for relief (vs. 14).⁴ (8) The return to life of the smitten one guarantees the life of the group (vs. 16).⁵ (9) The suffering was to bring prosperity (vss. 16-17).⁶ (10) Love was the redeeming force (vs. 17).⁷

Having demonstrated the nature-cult character of the above poem, it becomes necessary to produce reasons for dating it in or near to Isaiah's time, if it is to be used as evidence for our thesis. The reasons usually urged against the authenticity of this poem as the work of King Hezekiah are: (1) the unproved premise that the Kings account (a Deuteronomic product) is prior

¹Cf. vss. 12 and 13. The duration of the time elapsing between the "death" and "resurrection" in the nature cults varied from two to eleven days; the most common number of days was three or four. Cf. H. G. May, "The Fertility Cult in Hosea," *AJSL*, XLVIII, 84. In this connection, see also Hos. 6:2 and Mark 14:58.

²Cf., e.g., Syria, XII, p. 205, line 20; Mot is apparently designated as a "murdering lion": 𐤓𐤓𐤕, with which compare Hos. 5:14; 13:7. Is. 29:1, 2, 7 refers to Jerusalem as Ariel, "lion of God"; this may perhaps be a cultic allusion. Cf. also Cant. 4:8; Hos. 11:10; II Sam. 1:23; Gen. 49:9. Dhorme, *op. cit.*, p. 366, lines 6-7; p. 367. Hussey, *op. cit.*, p. 172: "a leopard going in search of a lamb as prey, art thou. A lion roving about the fields art thou!" Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-104. W. F. Albright, *Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 31 (1928), pp. 6-8; No. 39 (1930), p. 7. C. Vellay, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110. S. H. Langdon, *Mythology of All Races*, V, 31-32, 47.

³Cf. Langdon, *ibid.*, pp. 31, 32, 34; Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, xiv, liv. Albright, *op. cit.*, No. 39 (1930), p. 4; Tammuz spoken of as "him of dovelike voice": Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 184; in the ritual: "I moan like a dove, night and day," p. 158. Compare with Isa. 59:11. Also see Cant. 1:15; 2:12; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2; 6:9; Psa. 56:1; 74:19; Neh. 2:8.

⁴Cf. Syria, XIII, Pl. XXVI, line 19; Pl. XXVII, line 85. Also cf. Isa. 8:21, where 𐤓𐤓𐤕 is used.

⁵The typical function of Tammuz.

⁶The purpose of the death of the dying god might be easily so interpreted since fertility was attendant on his return.

⁷True of the mother-goddess in her search. Comp. Cant. 8:4.

in time to that of Isaiah 38 and its omission from the book of Kings; (2) its similarity to certain Psalms in style and language; (3) its heading and appendix (vss. 9 and 20) indicating a liturgical use; (4) its lack of any indication that the writer was a king, or that the author writes of any particular affliction.

Without a detailed study of the relation of Isaiah 36-39, or even of Isaiah 38, to the corresponding section of II Kings, there are certain general observations which seem to prove that the Isaianic chapters are not dependent on II Kings. The two dominant ideas of the Deuteronomic editor of II Kings are too well recognized to need more than statement: (1) Yahweh is glorified as the source of all that is good; (2) kings who are Yahwists are designated "good" and all others are "evil".¹ In contrast it is apparent that in Isaiah 38 it is the prophet rather than the king who is exalted into prominence,² although interest in the power and greatness of Yahweh is evident.³ For the author of Isaiah 38, the prophet is the hero. In Isaiah 38:4-5 the command to the prophet to seek the king out (included in II Kings 20:5) is omitted, as is also the reference to the king's being healed in three days. The phrase "for my servant David's sake" is omitted from Yahweh's statement that he will defend Jerusalem.⁴ Again in Isaiah 38 the miracle of the sun's regression is stated as originating with the prophet⁵ rather than

¹Cf. e.g., II Kgs. 15:34; 16:2; 17:2. Hezekiah as a "good" king is given prominence in the section devoted to him: II Kgs. 18:4-16, 18 a, 20 a; 19:20 d; 20:5 a, d, e; 20:6 cd, 8, 9 c, 10, 11 a.

²Isa. 38:1, 4.

³Isa. 38:1-8.

⁴Isa. 38:6.

⁵Isa. 38:7.

with the choice of the king, as in II Kings 20:9-11.

These observations make it obvious that the date of Isaiah 38 must be during or shortly after the time of Isaiah. The writer's interest in the prominence of the prophet and his failure to aggrandize the king precludes a date in the latter part of the seventh century, for, beginning with Josiah's reign the prophetic party was working through the king as the agent of reform to establish the supremacy of Yahwism. The struggle and antipathy between the prophet and Hezekiah which Isaiah 38 reflects¹ indicates a period in which the power of the king is still absolute,--not one in which the kingship is controlled by the prophets as in the time of Josiah. A date between 640 B. C. and 608 B. C. is therefore not to be thought of. The subsequent exilic and post-exilic period of political messianism is still less likely to produce literature glorifying the prophet Isaiah in conflict with the Hebrew king.

Consideration of these facts leads us to believe that the chapter was probably put into approximately its present form by one of Isaiah's disciples during the reign of Manasseh, a devotee of the nature cults and as such the natural opponent of the protestant Yahwists.² Another fact that points in the same direction is the Jewish tradition that Isaiah met severe criticism and finally death in Manasseh's reign.³ The charge against the Yahweh prophets in Manasseh's reign was doubtless that of opposing the king's policies and thus, as the royalists reasoned, the national welfare. What independence may have resulted from

¹See also Is. 1:10, 23; 3:14-15; 10:1-2.

²II Kgs. 21:1 ff.

³Cf. G. B. Gray, "Introduction," Isaiah ("International Critical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. lxxii.

Sennacherib's withdrawal from the siege of Jerusalem in 701 B. C. was thrown away by Manasseh's payment of tribute. The Yahwistic prophets must have counselled against this, and the charge was doubtless brought that they were thwarting the nation's good. Such a prophet found the materials for his defense ready to his hand. Isaiah had counselled a policy of quiet neutrality with loyalty to Yahweh and had been vindicated. Jerusalem had been saved. Loyalty to Yahweh had worked out best for the nation in Hezekiah's reign. Why not again? In fact, instead of being disloyal to the king and nation, the Yahwistic prophets were advising a course and a policy already proved to be correct by history. It had saved the nation in a time of great crisis; it would do so again. So much for the probable date of this chapter, the motivation that prompted its inclusion in the book of Isaiah, and the claim that II Kings 20 antedates it.

As to the omission of the poem from II Kings it may be said that poetry did not well fit the style of an abbreviated historical account. Further, it is to be observed that the cult basis of this literature used as ritual in the time of Hezekiah doubtless operated to prevent its inclusion in the Deuteronomic picture of a king rated as a good Yahwist.

The interpretation of this poem here proposed is that it is an adaptation of a nature-cult elegy pertaining to the ritual of the dying god, a role filled by the king Hezekiah.¹ In its present form it, as well as the rest of Isaiah 38, must have come

¹During the annual celebration of the rites attendant on the death and resurrection of the deity, the king (or one of the royal family) became the counterpart of the god. Thus symbolizing the god, he became the guarantee of prosperity and of the cessation of calamity to his people. Cf. Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 144 and Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 84 ff. Also see in this connection the important suggestions of Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 100 ff.

from Isaiah's time or shortly after.

Certain factors in Isaiah 38:1-8 point also in this direction. Isaiah 38:1 a, for instance, may be translated: "In those days was Hezekiah faint [נָחַשׁ = sick, weak]¹ on account of Mot [מוֹת],"² the deity who, according to the Ras Shamra ritual, smote Ale'n-Baal. Again, the Kings account, presumably because it appears to credit a miracle to Yahweh, records that Hezekiah was to be healed "in three days" from his affliction.³ Besides indicating the cultic nature of this "healing,"⁴ this reference to the period of time makes it very probable that the above translation of Isa. 38:1 a (identical with II Kgs. 20:1 a) is correct. Surely an illness from which one might recover in three days' time sufficiently to go about normal activity⁵ cannot have been a "sickness unto death," in the ordinary sense.

Still another suggestion that this poem commemorates Hezekiah's filling the role of the dying god in order to bring back to his people prosperity at the siege of Jerusalem is furnished by the reference to Hezekiah as the נָשִׂיטֵי-תְלָיִי in II Kings 20:5. The word תְּלָיִי always refers to some official capacity. Job 31:37 indicates that a תְּלָיִי was in close communion with deity. In II Sam. 5:2 David is said to be the תְּלָיִי who will shepherd the people.⁶ Again in II Sam. 6:21 David says that in

¹Cf. note on נָחַשׁ , p. 33, n. 3.

²For this use of נָחַשׁ , cf. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), ad loc., sec. 5 f. Cf. usage similar to the above in Deut. 14:1 (נָחַשׁ); Is. 55:5; Hos. 10:5; Lev. 19:28; Jer. 16:6 b; 3; 17; Josh. 9:9; Ezek. 36:22; Is. 15:5; 16:7, 11.

³II Kgs. 20:5.

⁴Cf. note 1, p. 38, discussion of the period between "death" and "resurrection" in the ritual.

⁵Is. 38:22; II Kgs. 20:5.

⁶A common designation of Tammuz. Cf. nn. 4 and 5, p. 37.

as much as Yahweh has appointed him $\sqrt{11}$ of the people, he will surely engage in the cult ceremonies which include nakedness, dancing, the giving of raisin-cakes, and other acts suggesting nature cult ritual. Similarly Saul was anointed $\sqrt{11}$ to save the people from the Philistines as an emissary from God.¹ Later David was appointed to the office because of Saul's failure to function as the medium of the divine will.²

The root $\sqrt{11}$ likewise is frequently used to indicate the making known of the divine word. Joseph as the mediator between God and Pharaoh "declared" the plan of Yahweh.³ Moses stood between the people and God to "show" them the word of Yahweh.⁴ Samuel did the same office for Saul⁵ and Gad for David.⁶ The prophet Micah said that he was full of power by the spirit of Yahweh to "declare" the sin of Jacob.⁷ A clear indication of the connection of this root with nature-cult divination is furnished by Hosea 4:12. Other passages link it with the predictive function.⁸ Hezekiah, in the popular mind, performed such a mediating, predictive function.

It appears from the above evidence that the "sickness" attributed to Hezekiah was in reality a ritual performance by the king of the role of dying god in order to avert the fall of Jer-

¹I Sam. 9:16.

²I Sam. 13:14. Other occurrences indicating the king as in special relation to deity are: Ez. 28:2; I Kgs. 1:35; 14:7; 16:2.

³Gen. 41:25.

⁴Dt. 5:5.

⁵I Sam. 15:16.

⁶II Sam. 24:13.

⁷Micah 3:8.

⁸E. g., Jer. 42:3; Ps. 147:19.

usalem when it was besieged by the Assyrians and to bring back prosperity.

The purpose of the author of Isaiah 38 was, as suggested above, to show that it was because of the Yahwistic prophet Isaiah and through the power of Yahweh that the crisis of 701 B. C. was averted. Thus he defended his own loyalty to the nation's interests in a time when the prophetic type of Yahwism was exceedingly unpopular, if not indeed, dangerous. He apparently knew that Isaiah, in distress at Hezekiah's opportunism and his proposal to find the way out of the Jerusalem crisis by submitting to the ritual death, had at first informed the king that he was marked for real death, not a mere ceremonial "dying." A little later, motivated by his patriotic loyalty to Jerusalem, Isaiah had asserted that Yahweh should save Hezekiah and the city. In the extremity, the king, with characteristic genius, turned to Yahwism and the prophet Isaiah. He who was gifted in political opportunism thus played the same game in religion.¹ The city was saved, and the ritual psalm commemorating the fact of the king's recovery and the saving of Jerusalem in terms of the nature cult ritual but giving the credit to Yahweh for the outcome² was written.³ Thus a pre-Deuteronomic prophet justified his own stand for Yahwism as that most certain to promote the welfare of the nation,--as the policy of the crown which had historically proved to be the course of salvation in Hezekiah's time. He was, doubtless, making a bid not only for recognition of the

¹Cf. pp. 7 and 8 above. See also note 3, p. 7.

²Cf. Is. 38:11, 20.

³As to Hezekiah's authorship of the psalm, of course nothing can be proved; its inclusion here is significant as proving the existence and use of the nature-cult ritual in Judah at this time.

truth of his own position and freedom from persecution but also for the active support of Manasseh for Yahwism. Thus, apparently, was Isaiah's message and action used to plead for the hearing of the message of a later prophet, much as Jeremiah used the experience and message of Micah to justify his own message.¹

As to the argument that the style and language of the poem are similar to that of Job and certain of the Psalms, (such as Psalm 6:5; 30:9; 88:10-12; 94:17), our view simply concurs in recognizing the similarity. Certain Psalms are certainly pre-exilic in origin and others contain figures and allusions of very early origin, some even being processional hymns of the king's ascent to the throne.² If this poem is of nature-cult origin, we should expect to find familiar imagery in it.

As to its liturgical use, that is exactly what is to be expected of nature-cult ritual. As to the statement that the speaker in the poem is not indicated to be a king and the affliction is not particularized in any way, it may be replied that such a ritualistic poem, presumably used whenever the rite took place, would necessarily have a general character. The king speaks in the role of the smitten deity.

Tammuz is often said to have met death by drowning.³ The destructive aspect of the cult was often expressed in terms of the raging storm, flood, sweeping torrent, hailstorm, thunder and lightning, earthquake and destructive fire,--all associated

¹Cf. Jer. 26:16-19.

²E. g., Ps. 45; 24. A. R. Johnson has conclusively shown that certain other psalms had their basis in the nature-cult ritual. Cf. his "The Role of the King in the Jerusalem Cultus," in Hooke, *op. cit.*, pp. 73 ff.

³Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 19; J. P. Peters, "Worship of Tammuz," *JBL*, XXXVI (Philadelphia, Pa.: The Society of Biblical Research and Exegesis), 106.

with the nature religions.¹ Removal of fertility and destruction by means of flood and hailstorm are reminiscent of such activity on the part of Adad,² Ramman,³ Ishtar,⁴ Innini,⁵ and Enlil,⁶ deities associated with the nature cults. Tammuz is sometimes spoken of as the god of the storm,⁷ and often as having been smitten by the overwhelming storm.⁸

Of these figures, particularly of that of the overflowing stream, Isaiah makes frequent use. A typical instance is in Isaiah 28:14-18, where the prophet quotes those who have put their trust in cult magic⁹ as saying: "The overflowing scourge [𐎶 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶] that passes over shall not reach us."¹⁰ In contrast Isaiah remarks: "Hail shall sweep away [your] refuge of falsehood, and waters shall overwhelm [𐎶𐎶𐎶𐎶] [your] shelter"¹¹

¹F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 57; Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 110-111; Peters, op. cit., JBL, XXXVI, 102-106. Prince, op. cit., AJSL, XXVII, 84.

²F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, pp. 13, 57.

³Rogers, op. cit., p. 464. M. Jastrow, Religion of the Babylonians and Assyrians (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1912), pp. 160-161. F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 15.

⁴M. I. Hussey, op. cit., AJSL, XXIII, 164-165. Rogers, op. cit., pp. 155, 163.

⁵S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 261.

⁶Peters, op. cit., JBL, XXVII, 102, 104-105.

⁷S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, pp. 305-306; Sumerian Liturgical Texts (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1917), p. 176; Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 110-111. H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns and Prayers to the God Dumu-zī, p. 28.

⁸Rogers, op. cit., p. 181; F. A. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Lamentations," AJSL, XXVII, 313; Prince, op. cit., AJSL, XXVII, 84-86. Peters, op. cit., JBL, XXXVI, 106.

⁹For a full discussion of this complete passage see section on "Descent to Sheol."

¹⁰Is. 28:15 b.

¹¹Is. 28:17 b.

and "The overwhelming scourge [$\text{q}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w} \text{ b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$] that passes over, to it ye shall be for trampling."¹

Although Box calls $\text{q}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w} \text{ b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$ ² "an impossible expression,"³ its very strange mixing of figures seems to guarantee its genuineness. It is very probable that $\text{b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$ was used to mean "scourge" in the sense of "destruction"⁴ as well as in the more concrete sense of "whip." May we not see in this passage the union of two figures drawn from the wounding and death of the god: the smiting and death by flood? After a terrific storm the lashing of the rushing waters and the destructiveness of the sudden overflow of waters was well known to the Hebrews and furnished a striking picture of sudden and overwhelming destruction to Isaiah's hearers. In view especially of the comparison of the "word"⁵ of Marduk,⁶ Enlil,⁷ and Innini⁸ with the "onrushing storm," this interpretation is appealing in connection with the other references to the nature cultus in this passage.⁹ $\text{q}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$ may

¹Is. 38:18 b.

²Cf. also Is. 8:8; 10:26; 30:28.

³G. H. Box, Book of Isaiah (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1909), p. 127, note ee.

⁴Indication is in $\text{b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$ = rowing (i.e., lashing or beating the water): Cf. Is. 33:21; $\text{b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$ = scourge in figurative sense: cf. Josh. 23:13; I Kgs. 12:11, 14; Job 9:23.

⁵Cf. Is. 28:14: $\text{q}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w} \text{ b}^{\text{b}}\text{i}\text{w}$.

⁶Peters, op. cit., JBL, XXXVI, 104: "The word of Marduk overflows the harvest in its season. The word of the lord is an onrushing deluge..... The word of Marduk is a flood which turns away the dykes."

⁷Cf. Peters, ibid., p. 102.

⁸Cf. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 261.

⁹See note 9, p. 46.

have fertility cult associations.¹

In this passage Isaiah has adopted the symbol of the overflowing stream, a figure of the destructive side of the nature-cult motif, to say that destruction is the result of faith in its ritual. In another passage (Isaiah 8:7-8) the prophet adopts this figure in speaking of the destruction that will come from Assyria, the source of which is Ahaz' own trust in that imperialistic nation rather than in Yahweh.²

In his beneficent aspect the dying-rising god was also associated with the flowing of streams and the coming of the vivifying rains.³ This is the basis of the remark by the prophet that Ahaz has refused the waters of Shiloah (i.e., Yahweh). In place of the beneficent favor of Yahweh Ahaz has brought on himself and his people the tempest of Assyrian imperialism.⁴

Other Isaiank references to the water aspects of the nature-cult ideology are: Isa. 10:22, 26; 23:10; 28:2; 29:7-8; 30:28, 30; 32:2, 19.

(b) The Mourning for the God

The death of vegetation and lack of fertility was ritually bewailed, especially by the women. This mourning for the departed god, the source of crop fertility, is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in Isaiah 32:9-14:

¹See Cant. 8:7; compare Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 181, lines 10-12, where Tammuz lies drowned. Also see Ezek. 13:13; Ps. 69:3, 16; 32:6; 124:4. In this connection see Johnson, *op. cit.*, 95-98, where it is shown that references to floods in several psalms have a fertility cult background.

²Cf. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," *AJSL*, L, 213-215, which interpretation is here adopted.

³Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, p. 18.

⁴Isa. 8:5-8.

O women secure, rise up and hear my voice; daughters reposing, give heed to my word: 'For days beyond a year [a year and a day], you repositors shall quake¹ because the vintage shall cease, the increase [gathering, harvest] shall not come.' Quake², ye secure ones; tremble, ye repositors. Strip and be naked³ and put a girdle⁴ upon loins, upon breasts, ⁵wailing⁵ over fields of delight, ⁶over the fruitful vine. Upon soil of my people, the thorn [briar] shall come up, for upon all houses of exultation [mirth, joy], ⁸a jubilant city. For the palace shall be forsaken; the noise of the city be removed; mound and tower (?) shall be for caves forever, exultation⁹ of wild asses, pasture of flocks.

Ritual weeping¹⁰ was accompanied by beating of breasts,¹¹

¹ חרד : Connection with divine seizure: I Sam. 14:15. Parallels רגז; Hos. 11:10, 11; Ez. 38:21; Gen. 42:28; Ex. 19:18.

²Cf. note 1, above.

³ טָבַע : cf. Cant. 5:3; I Sam. 19:24; Ez. 26:16; 44:19; Lev. 16:23; Hos. 2:5; Gen. 37:23. Definite fertility cult associations: ערה = Is. 3:17. Cf. also Num. 20:26, 28; Mic. 2:8; 3:3; Hos. 7:1.

⁴ חנוּרָה : cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XVIII, line 17. Used especially in mourning with סָפַד; cf. Is. 15:3; 22:12; Lam. 2:10; Ez. 7:18; 27:31; II Sam. 3:31; Jer. 4:8; 6:26; 49:3; I Kgs. 20:32; also Is. 3:24.

⁵ סָפַד : wailing for the dead: I Sam. 25:1; 28:3; I Kgs. 14:13; 14:18; Gen. 23:2; Jer. 16:6; 22:18; 34:5; Eccles. 12:5. Root of ritual wailing: Gen. 50:10; Zech. 12:10-11; Amos 5:16; Is. 22:12; Mic. 1:8.

⁶ שְׂדֵי חֶמֶד : comp. Amos 5:11. Root חֶמֶד has definite cult associations. Cf. Cant. 5:16; Hos. 9:16; Dan. 11:37; Is. 1:29; Cant. 2:3. Use of root in Ras Shamra ritual, Syria, XIII, Pl. XXVII, Col. VI, lines 19, 21.

⁷ גִּפְנֵי צִיּוֹן : Hos. 2:14; 10:1; 14:8; Jer. 2:21; Cant. 2:13; 6:11; 7:13; Gen. 49:11. See also Syria, XIII, Col. IV, lines 5, 7, 10.

⁸ קִשּׁוּט : cf. Hos. 2:13; Lam. 5:15; Is. 24:7-8; 62:5; 66:10-11.

⁹Cf. note 8, above.

¹⁰While it is to be readily admitted that not all mourning customs relate directly and definitely to the dying-rising god cultus, there can be no doubt but that such reference is made in the passage above, for the ritual wailing for fertility is said by the prophet to be symbolic of the real weeping for lack of harvests which will take place.

¹¹Cf. Vellay, op. cit., p. 129.

calling out for the dead god,¹ girding with sackcloth,² and search for the deity.³ Some recognition of the folly of these rites may have been back of the statement of Gilgamesh who reproached Ishtar because "Tammuz, the spouse of thy youth, thou compellest to weep year after year."⁴

Weeping,⁵ lamentation,⁶ baldness,⁷ and putting on of sackcloth,⁸ figures drawn from the rites of the dying god, are used in Isaiah 22:12, contrasted with those of feasting, drinking, and rejoicing associated with the return of the deity.⁹ Shaving the head was also a mourning rite,¹⁰ to which Isaiah referred in predicting the destruction of Judah at the hands of Assyria.¹¹

¹Cf. Vellay, *op. cit.*, p. 129. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 184. Also see Jer. 22:18; Amos 5:16-17.

²Is. 32:11; 15:3; 22:12; 3:24; Jer. 4:8; 6:26; II Sam. 3:31.

³Cf. p. 49, n. 7; also May, *op. cit.*, *AJSL*, XLVIII, 81-84.

⁴Cf. Vanderburgh, *Sumerian Hymns*, p. 17, ll. 46-47. Note the use of *bi-tak-ka-a* (Hebr. *בִּיטַקְכָּא*). Cf. Is. 15:2-3; 16:9; 22:4; Jer. 22:10. See also Prince, *op. cit.*, *AJSL*, XXVII, 87, n. on l. 15.

⁵Use of *בִּיטַקְכָּא* in this connection is seen in fertility ritual, n. 4, above. Cf. E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter and Co., 1931), I, 49, l. 4; 58, l. 5; 60, l. 15. See also Judg. 11:37-38; Ez. 8:14; Mic. 1:10; Lam. 1:23; Ps. 126:6; Jer. 48:32; Num. 20:29.

⁶Use of *גִּדּוּל* in fertility ritual, cf. p. 49, n. 5.

⁷*קִרְחָה*: cf. Amos 8:10; Mic. 1:16; Is. 3:24; 15:2; Ez. 7:18; 27:31; Dt. 14:1.

⁸*גִּדּוּל*: cf. p. 49, n. 4.

⁹*שִׂמְחָה*: Cf. Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; 31:13; Ps. 45:8. *שִׂמְחָה*: cf. Cant. 3:11; Is. 30:29; II Sam. 6:12; Num. 10:10; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; Neh. 8:17. See also Ras Shamra text, *Syria*, XII, Pl. XL, Col. III, l. 14.

¹⁰Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Is. 15:2. Cf. in contrast the prohibition to the Nazirite, Num. 6:5; also the general prohibition of Lev. 19:27; 21:5.

¹¹Is. 7:20.

In the derisive chant against Tyre (Isaiah 23:1-14) cult mourning and rejoicing terms,¹ ילל² and עלז,³ are used. The X טט concerning Moab is a lament filled with cult imagery. Words connected with the ritual are: קרחה⁵ בכה⁴, ילל⁴, חנך,⁷ and וצק.⁸

Isaiah makes use of the ritual weeping as a type of the real weeping for distress and affliction that shall take place because the people have trusted in forms to solve their difficulties rather than in conduct in accord with Yahweh's basic principles of moral living. The ritual beating of the breasts and mourning for the death of vegetation is sarcastically pointed out as liable to become genuinely realistic.⁹ Thus does Isaiah openly reject the philosophy of life dependent on a magical technique.

(c) The Descent to Sheol

At his demise the dead god went to the underworld where he spent the time until the "turn of the year." There his con-

¹To say that certain words are cult terms does not necessarily mean that they may not be used in non-technical ways. Isaiah's undoubted use of such technical terms in Isaiah 32:9 ff. furnishes good reason to believe that he used them also in the passages cited, especially since the point of such usage is plain in the context.

²Cf. Is. 23:1, 6, 14; 15:2-3; 16:7; Hos. 7:14; 10:5; Mic. 1:8; Jer. 48:39; 49:3; Ez. 30:2; Is. 13:6.

³Is. 23:7, 12; 22:2; 24:8; 5:14; 32:13; Hab. 3:17-18.

⁴Cf. Is. 15:2-3; 16:7. Also n. 2 above.

⁵Is. 15:2, 3, 5; 16:9. Also p. 50, n. 5.

⁶Cf. p. 50, n. 7.

⁷Cf. p. 49, n. 4.

⁸Is. 15:4, 5, 8. Also Hos. 7:14; Is. 26:17; 65:19; Judg. 10:14; Ez. 27:30; Jer. 30:15; 48:4, 31, 34. Parallel form to פצץ, Is. 5:7; 33:7; Jer. 22:20; 49:3; 48:3; 48:5.

⁹Is. 32:9 ff.

sort sought him and strove to secure his release. Only by his returning to the scenes of active life could the fertility of earth, beasts, and men be guaranteed. While he was in Sheol, the god was weak, helpless, without strength or vital power.

Ishtar struck a bargain with Ereshkigal, goddess of the underworld, for the return of Tammuz to life. Adonis was permitted to return to the company of Aphrodite for a part of the year by Pluto, god of Hades. Various other fertility deities were allowed to return to earth for a season after a bargain was made with the god of the underworld.

Reference to such a bargain is made in Isaiah 28:14-18:

Wherefore, hear the word of Yahweh, scorning men, rulers of this people who are in Jerusalem: For ye have said: 'We have made a covenant with Mot¹ and with Sheol we have made a wave-offering [מִן הַיָּד]:² So that the overflowing scourge that passes over shall not reach us, for we have made a lie [כַּזְבֵּנוּ]³ our shelter, and in falsehood [בְּשָׁוְיָנוּ]⁴

¹The deity of the underworld in the Ras Shamra ritual. Syria, XII, Pl. XXXIX, Col. II, ll. 9-12.

²The translation of מִן הַיָּד as מִן הַיָּד and מִן הַיָּד as מִן הַיָּד makes good parallelism, justifies the versional reading of the Old Latin and Vulgate: "pactum" and the LXX "συνθήκας," and does no violence to MT. The wave-offerings were מִן הַיָּד (i.e., "prosperity" or "welfare" offerings: Lev. 7:30; 9:20-22; 10:14-15; Ex. 29:26-27; Num. 6:15-20; 18:11-12). In further support of this interpretation of מִן הַיָּד it is to be noted that the root meaning of מִן is "completion" or "fulfillment." It is also to be recalled that in the Ras Shamra ritual two gracious gods, born to the "women, wife of El," are Shahar and Shelem. Shahar, "dawn," is to be connected, thinks Dr. W. C. Graham, with the winter solstice, "the dawn of hope" for the new year, while Shelem is to be connected with the fulfillment of that hope in midsummer. A. R. Johnson translates the root מִן as "welfare": cf. op. cit., p. 88, n. 1, where he refers also to J. Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture, pp. 263-335.

³כַּזְבֵּנוּ is often used in reference to false divination or devotion to religion other than Yahwism: Ez. 13:6, 8, 19; 21:34; 22:28; Mic. 2:11; Amos 2:4. In Hos. 12:2 the word parallels covenant with Assyria.

⁴בְּשָׁוְיָנוּ: this word is also frequently used in connection with false divination or worship of foreign gods. Cf. Is. 9:14; Zech. 10:2; Jer. 5:31; 10:14 = 51:17; 13:25; 14:14; 23:25, 26; Hab. 2:18.

have we hidden ourselves.' Therefore Adonai Yahweh has said: 'Behold, I am founding [laying] in Sion a stone, a tested stone, a precious corner [stone], a tested foundation. He that believes shall not make haste. For I have put justice for line and righteousness for plummet, and hail shall sweep away [your] refuge of falsehood [𐤏 𐤓 𐤕] and waters shall overwhelm your shelter. And your covenant with Mot shall be covered over, and your bargain [wave-offerings] [𐤏 𐤓 𐤕] with Sheol shall not stand, [so that] overflowing scourge that passes over--to it ye shall be for trampling.'

It is an appealing interpretation to link this passage with the crisis of 734-735 B. C. If we do so, Damascus was the scourge feared by the rulers. They made a bargain with Assyria (called Mot by the prophet) involving political and religious vassalism,¹ in the hope of averting destruction at the hands of Judah's near neighbors.² Under figures drawn from the nature cults, Isaiah objects to both political and religious trust in Assyria and implies that patient trust in Yahweh is the only way out.³ Because of their false trust in religio-political magic, another scourge, not Damascus but trusted Assyria, will overwhelm them completely.

Whether this interpretation be correct in details or no, it is apparent that the passage uses nature-cult imagery based on a magic ritual performed to guarantee prosperity and to avoid calamity, the death-dealing scourge.⁴ The scoffing rulers,

¹II Kgs. 16:10-20.

²Whether this passage be linked with the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis, or as Cornill (Introduction to the Canonical Books of the Old Testament, trans. G. H. Box (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907), p. 267) and others suggest with that of 701 B. C., the interpretation here advanced is equally valid. In the latter case, the "covenant with Mot" is a reference to intrigue with the Egyptians and the "scourge" is Assyria. If it be related to the trials of 701, it shows that then as in the earlier crisis Isaiah consistently opposed foreign alliances for Judah. Cf. A. R. Johnson's study, op. cit., pp. 94-95, in which he states that Mot is frequently to be interpreted as a reference to the nations of the earth.

³Cf. also Is. 7:4-9; 8:6-8, 11-12. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L, 215, n. 13.

⁴Cf. discussion of 𐤏 𐤓 𐤕 𐤕, p. 48.

because they have bargained with Mot through the wave-offering, feel that prosperity is assured and that no evil can befall them. But the prophet has no faith in such magic; a fixed boulder, planted by Yahweh, shall only be able to resist the power of the overwhelming flood.¹ Thus faith in bargaining with the Power of the underworld for prosperity and safety is ridiculed and its efficacy definitely denied. This is a good illustration of the prophet's rejection of the nature-cult pattern of thinking.

Something of Isaiah's contempt for a religion that trusted in the dead god is also seen in Isaiah 8:19-22:

And when they shall say unto you: "Seek² [שׁוּ] unto wizards³ [אֲבוֹת] and unto the spirits⁴ [דְּעִיִּים], the mourners⁵ [מְצַפִּים] and the moaners⁶ [מְהִינִים] [saying]: 'Shall not a people seek⁷ unto its gods, -on behalf of the living unto the dead?' To the teaching and the testimony! Verily they shall speak according to this manner: "Him [the king] for whom there is no Shāḥar."⁸ And he shall pass through it [Sheol],⁹ distressed and hungry; and it shall come

¹Cf. A. B. Ehrlich, "Isaiah and Jeremiah," Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908), IV, pp. 100-101.

² שׁוּ, a cult word. Cf. Is. 19:3; Hos. 10:12; Jer. 8:2; 30:14-17; Ps. 78:34; Amos 5:4-6; Deut. 18:11; Zeph. 1:6.

³The אֲבוֹת were apparently traffickers with the spirits of the underworld. Cf. Is. 29:4; I Sam. 28:3, 7-9.

⁴דְּעִיִּים: fertility cult connection practically certain; cf. Lev. 20:6 where the word is coupled with זָנָה. Everywhere it parallels אִלִּים.

⁵מְצַפִּים used only in Isaiah; meaning associated with bird sounds: Is. 10:14; 38:14.

⁶Cf. usage in Is. 16:7; 38:14; 59:11; Jer. 48:31.

⁷See note 2, above.

⁸In the Ras Shamra ritual one of the prosperity-bringing sons of El. Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, l. 53. Significance of the fertility motif here was pointed out by Dr. W. C. Graham prior to publication of the Ras Shamra inscriptions.

⁹Since the previous context evidently deals with the underworld, we prefer to regard אֲדָמָה as a reference to Sheol. Dr. W. C. Graham suggests that it refers to the land. This is possible and may be preferable. In either case the prophet is speaking of the king's faith in the ritual of the underworld. Cf. p. 55, n. 1.

to pass when he is hungry and has worked himself into a rage, then he shall curse his king and his god, and shall face on high [turn toward heaven]. He shall look expectantly to the land [earth], but behold, distress and darkness, the fluttering of distress, and into darkness [shall he] be driven away.

The prophet speaks to his disciples urging their loyalty to his teaching when the people urge them to faith in the underworld deities. Under the figures of the fertility cult he derides the people's faith in the cultus. He is saying that the people will one day realize the folly of following the king as a god who is to bring about prosperity and fertility: the Shahar of good times. They will see that there is no hope for them in him. As the king goes through this role with its attendant hunger and distress in the underworld,¹ he will come to realize the inefficacy of his faith in Assyria and a religion of the underworld; then he will curse his god and his king, the Assyrian ruler, and turn away from trafficking with the regions of the dead to look on high for aid. Having done so, he will look expectantly to his country to see the signs of prosperity, but it will be too late. He shall have to reap the harvest of his folly in distress and darkness. At the end of his search, he shall find nought but destruction.² Using the whole setting of the descent to Sheol and the return of the god as a background, Isaiah asserts that

¹If it be objected that imputing hunger to the dead god in Sheol is strange and unusual, it may be replied that mortuary offerings to the dead are usual, that Psalm 23 refers to the spreading of a table before one presumably in the valley of Mot's shadow, and further that the goddess brought food to Tammuz in the underworld: cf. S. Langdon, Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1909), p. 331, ll. 2-8: "pure herbs in ia-ku-bil oil, honey and butter, aromatics [mixed?] with wine, his sister to gladden the heart of Tammuz, for the shepherd Tammuz, whose pure heart is of heaven, brought, into the nether resting-place she entered, set herself before him." Further, cf. Syria, XV, p. 226 f, l. 18 f. where great sacrifices are offered that Alein-Baal may absorb the blood and thus the life in order to return thence.

²Cf. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L, 201 ff, especially 215-216.

there is no Shāḥar for the king and thus for the people.¹ This reference to Shāḥar, one of the children of the sacred marriage,² whose birth the people thought to presage the return of fertility,³ is an illustration of the prophet's use of a cult motif as a foil to the real idea which he would impress. Dependence on the pattern shall be proved false in the crucible of human experience, he is saying.

Similarly, in Isaiah 5:13-14, the prophet speaks of Sheol as engulfing those⁴ who rejoice⁵ in her.

In Isaiah 38:10-20, the ritual descent to Sheol is spoken of as the ritual engaged in by Hezekiah to bring prosperity⁶ to Judah, apparently in a time of crisis.⁷

It is apparent that the symbolism of the descent to Sheol is for Isaiah a symbolism of irremediable destruction for the most part. This shows that he believed the nature-religion to be essentially fallacious and subversive of the best interests of the people. There was no use in trafficking with a dead god; Yahweh was the mighty one,⁸ the god of the living and not of the

¹The king of Babylon is also referred to ironically as Shāḥar, doubtless by another writer: Is. 14:12. In spite of the guarantee of his sacred origin he is brought down to the underworld permanently by the power of Yahweh, as all other men are.

²Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 51 f.

³This conclusion, suggested by W. G. Williams in "The Ras Shamra Inscriptions and Israel's Cultural Heritage" (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation: University of Chicago, 1934), p. 144, was arrived at independently by me.

⁴Cf. Graham, "The Interpretation of Isaiah 5:1-14," AJSL, XLV, 177-178.

⁵Note use of יָשָׁע.

⁶Vss. 16-17.

⁷Major discussion of this poem is under Death and Wounding of the God; further reference is made under the topic, The Resurrection, p. 57.

⁸Is. 10:12; 17:7; 31:1.

dead. Biblical literature represents that the common belief was that Yahweh had no control over nor communication with the realm of the dead.¹ Perhaps this representation is an attempt to combat the nature religions, fostered by the prophetic group loyal to Yahweh. It may well be the reason why so little explicit reference to life-after-death is found in the Old Testament, while burials from the earliest times indicate the existence of at least a crude belief in the future life,² and later burials attest its continuance.

(d) The Resurrection

There is in the words of the prophet Isaiah no direct evidence of the resurrection motif of the ritual of the dying-rising god. The whole implication of the mourning for fertility in Isaiah 32:9-12 and of the use of Adonis gardens in Isaiah 17:10-11 and 1:29-30 is, however, the expectation of the return of new life. It is this background of known ritual which makes it highly probable that the reference to Shaphar in Isaiah 8:20 is to be interpreted as presaging such a resurrection.³ It is the clear implication of the phrase, "Him for whom there is no Shaphar," that those who trusted in the dying god looked forward

¹Ps. 6:6; 88:5-6, 11-13; Is. 38:18.

²It appears that the belief of scholars that no clear doctrine of immortality emerges in Hebrew literature until late in the post-exilic period will have to be modified. The early appearance of the idea of life-after-death in Egypt, the presence in the Ancient East of the dying-rising god religion from the earliest times, and burials with utensils from the earliest times, point to early acquaintance with the idea of immortality in some form among the Hebrews. It is also an obvious lack of logic to regard it a probability that a more civilized and easier existence would beget a faith not developed in the primal stresses of life.

³At Ras Shamra there was such a ritual, part of which has been translated. Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX. Cf. n. 2, p. 52 above for an interpretation of the functions of the two gods, Shaphar and Shelem. On any interpretation they surely presage the return of fertility.

to his return. When the king engaged in this role,¹ it was expected that good times would follow upon his ritual visit to Sheol. In contrast Isaiah says that there will be nought but gloom and darkness. Thus he discounts the philosophy of life represented in faith in the dying god.

The psalm, Isaiah 38:10-20,² reflects hope for good as the result of the king's functioning in the role of the dying god. In the ritual he cries out: "O Adon, on account of these [things], men live; [therefore] thou shalt restore me and make me live."³ He is laid flat ('ה'י'ש) until morning when he will recover.⁴ For prosperity he suffered in the role⁵ and is to return from Sheol to the land of the living. It seems probable that Isaiah came to Hezekiah as he was preparing to undergo the ritual of "dying" in the cult, and informed him that his "death" was to be no make-believe. This seems the more probable because the statement of Isaiah recorded in both II Kings 20 and Isaiah 38, that the king "is dying [ה'י'ש: note the use of participle] and shall not live [ה'י'ש]," implies that on occasion the king could "die" and yet live again. Still more does this seem to be the correct interpretation when we reflect that the chapter earlier

¹Johnson, op. cit., has convincingly showed that the king played such a part in the cultus at Jerusalem. See especially pp. 73-85 and 98-105.

²Cf. general discussion of this passage, p. 35 ff.

³Is. 38:16. Compare Lamentations 4:20; also see Johnson, op. cit., p. 74.

⁴Is. 38:13 a. See also Is. 38:12 c and 13 c. The II Kgs. account (20:5) says recovery is to take place within three days. Compare Hosea 6:1-2, where healing also takes place on the third day. The period of time in Sheol in Isaiah 38 corresponds with that at Aphaca in the Adonis rites. Cf. Frazer, op. cit., pp. 182-184. On the variation of the length of time in Sheol in different localities, see May, op. cit., AJSL, XLVIII, 84.

⁵Isa. 38:17.

states that Hezekiah was "wounded [weak, sick] on account of Mot [or 'unto Death']". The king is told to appoint some one of his house to be ruler in his stead since this mock-death will turn out to be real.¹

Hezekiah is then frightened into recognition of Yahweh by his fear of the powers of the prophet, born of his belief in magic, and he repents and recovers according to a subsequent word of the prophet. He gives the credit for his recovery and his attendant hope for better times to Yahweh.

These allusions form only presumptive evidence of a resurrection motif, but in view of the other evidence of the dying-rising god pattern in Isaiah's time, these passages contribute their bit to the total picture of the relation of the prophet to the culture of his time, especially in view of such studies as that of H. G. May² and A. R. Johnson.³

These passages from Isaiah are the only ones which certainly reflect the times of the prophet with reference to this phase of the nature cultus. Isaiah 24-27, containing references,⁴ is a section full of fertility cult imagery and terms: אבל, נכח, ששן, ששן. Considerable portions of this section could easily have been written in Isaiah's time. No weight can longer be attached, we see, to the resurrection motif as proof of a late origin. However, the references to "many nations"⁵ seem to imply a later date than Isaiah's time for at least parts of the section. Several passages also seem to

¹Is. 38:1.

²Cf. p. 58, n. 4.

³Cf. p. 58, n. 1.

⁴Is. 24:15-16; 24:21; 25:7.

⁵Is. 26:1 f; 27:6; 27:12-13.

refer to the fall of Jerusalem.¹ In view of the uncertainty attaching to the authorship of these chapters, we shall not further consider them in this study.

(e) Feasting and Festivals

The Feast of Booths (חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת)² was evidently a harvest festival. It was probably the Palestinian counterpart of the Babylonian akitu festival.³ The similarities are too numerous to be unrelated. The booths were outside the city at some little distance.⁴ It is this separation apparently to which Isaiah refers in Isaiah 1:8 when he says that "the daughter of Sion [Jerusalem] is left as a booth [סֻכָּה] in the vineyard, as a hut in a cucumber field, as a city besieged." Such "temples" are referred to at Uruk, Ur, Babylon, Nineveh, Arbela, and Harran.⁵ Two such fetes, one at the beginning of the year in Nisan and the other in Tisrit, the seventh month, were held at Uruk, where the custom seems to have been as old as the Sumerians.⁶ The feasts held in connection with the festival were evidently connected with fertility.⁷ Booths were made of palm, myrtle, cedar,--all connected with the fertility cult, as numerous

¹Is. 25:7-8; 26:19.

²J. Morgenstern, "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals," JQR, VIII (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College of Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1917-1918), 31-54, identifies the Feast of Booths and Hebrew New Year celebrations with festivals of Canaanite origin, "undoubtedly a survival of the old Adonis rites."

³Cf. W. O. E. Oesterley, "Early Hebrew Fertility Ritual," in S. H. Hooke, Myth and Ritual (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 122-123.

⁴Cf. Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 88, 112, 147-148. See also Lev. 23:42-43; Exod. 33:1-7; Num. 11:26; Neh. 8:14-15.

⁵Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 88.

⁶Ibid., pp. 86-87, 93.

⁷Cf. Exod. 23:16 f; Deut. 16:9, 13-17; Lev. 23:39. Also cf. Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

references make clear.¹ The Feast of Booths lasted eight days.² The New Year celebrations culminating in the akitu ceremonies were of varying lengths, from eight to eleven or more days.³ There was a ceremonial procession in connection with these celebrations.⁴ The flute was used in the ritual procession.⁵ Isaiah refers to such a procession⁶ and the use of the flute in the 29th verse of Chapter 30 where he says:

The song shall be to you as [in] the night [when] is consecrated the feast [ן : dance, festival]⁷ and gladness of heart as one going with the flute [נ'ן] to come into the mountain of Yahweh, unto the Rock of Israel.

Rejoicing, mirth, and dancing accompanied this fete,⁸ as illus-

¹Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 183; Oesterley, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-142. Cf. Syria, XIII, Pl. XXVII, l. 72. See also Neh. 8:14-17; Lev. 23:40.

²Deut. 16:13 f; Lev. 23:36, 39; Neh. 8:14-18.

³Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 111-114. H. Radau, Bel, the Christ of Ancient Times (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1908) p. 47.

⁴Radau, *ibid.*; Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 94, 116, 104-105, 108-109. D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926), II, 18-19, 35, 102. J. H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Ancient Egypt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906), I, 300: "Feast of Going Forth." See also Psa. 24:2, 7-10; 42:4.

⁵Lucian, De Dea Syria, xliii, l; F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, pp. 18-19; Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Cf. Is. 30:29; 5:12; Ps. 118:25-26; 68:25-27; II Sam. 6:12-13 refer to the processions.

⁶Is. 38:15 probably refers also to this procession, although it is difficult to determine the exact meaning of ןןןן.

⁷Cf. J. Morgenstern, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-39 where he states that the original meaning of ן is "sacred dance"; these dances were celebrated at fixed times of the agricultural year and most of the details of these old agricultural festivals were certainly of non-Jahwistic origin.

⁸Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 95, 136; Breasted, Ancient Records of Ancient Egypt, I, 300; Barton, *op. cit.*, p. 482. A. Erman, Literature of the Ancient Egyptians, trans. A. M. Blackman (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1927), pp. 141-142, 144. Cf. also II Sam. 6:12-23; Lev. 23:40; Deut. 16:13-15; Judg. 21:21. Is. 22:13 probably refers to cultic activity.

trated in this passage. There were also wave-offerings in connection with it.¹

There is reference in Isaiah 1:13-14 to the festival of the new moon, connected apparently with the Sabbath which it parallels.²

Do not bring a vain offering; incense [קֶטֶר] is an abomination to me; new moon [חַדָּשׁ] and sabbath [שַׁבָּת] and calling of assembly - I cannot endure iniquity and (sacred) assembly. Your new moons and seasonal feasts [מוֹעֲדֵי יָמֶיךָ] my soul hates. They are unto me a burden; I am weary of bearing [them].

Certain usage of the word תְּשׁוּבָה connects it with the New Year festival, during which the fates of mankind were "fixed" for the ensuing year.³ Beside the etymological meaning, two passages indicate the association of this "assembly" with the magic of choosing "good" and "evil." Lamentations 1:15 indicates that the Lord "has called against me a מוֹעֵד to shatter my young men"; Zechariah 8:19 says that the feasts shall be "for joy, exultation, and מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה to Judah." Also Isaiah 14:13, which probably does not belong to the time of Isaiah himself,⁴ speaks of the "mountain of assembly [הַר-מוֹעֵד = decision ?]" in the extremities of the North,⁵ referring doubtless to the mythical assembly of the gods "to decide the fates of mankind." Many other passages⁶ besides Isaiah 1:14 associate the word

¹Lev. 23:10-12, 15-20; Is. 28:15, 18; Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 123, the thigh of ox; see also Exod. 29:22-28; Num. 8:15 ff, etc.

²Cf. also Amos 8:5; Hos. 2:13; Ez. 46:4-6; I Sam. 20:5, 18, 24, 27.

³Cf. Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 129, 135, 137, 146-147; H. Radau, *Bel, the Christ of Ancient Times*, p. 47; F. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 90, 100.

⁴G. H. Box, *Isaiah*, Appendix III, p. 363.

⁵Or perhaps Şapunah, the site of the Ras Shamra discoveries. Cf. also Ps. 48:3.

⁶Is. 33:20; Hos. 2:11; 9:5; Deut. 31:10; Gen. 18:14; Ex. 13:10; 23:15; 34:18; Lam. 2:7, 22.

with seasonal celebration.

The $\aleph$ appears also to have been an agricultural celebration,¹ although its character is somewhat obscured by the various uses of the word. In Isaiah 30:29, it is used apparently of the procession on the way to or returning from the Feast of Booths, as remarked above. In Isaiah 29:1, it refers to annual occurrences of festivals and probably is used in connection with the New Year rites.

There are some indications that the autobiographical section, Isaiah 6:1-13, may reflect a syncretistic worship in Jerusalem, a Yahwism based on a nature-cult ritual. It is to be noted that the first verse of the chapter says: "I saw Adonai [not Yahweh]² sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." The Adon is represented as having a "train" [$\aleph \text{ } \aleph$] which filled the temple. Although there is no case in Hebrew of the usage of this word in the sense of "retinue" or "company of attendants," the Vulgate evidently understood it in some such sense, translating "ea quae sub ipso erant." There is a close parallel here to the company of lesser gods following Ishtar and assembling in the temple at Uruk.³ The procession implied by Isaiah 6:1 was a mark of the New Year fete.⁴ The second verse speaks of $\aleph \text{ } \aleph$, serpent-like attendants, suggestive of the fertility cultus.⁵

¹Cf. Hos. 2:13-14; 9:1-5; Amos 5:21; Judg. 21:19; Zech. 14:16; Deut. 16:14. See also note 7 on p. 61.

²So also the Greek, Old Latin, and Vulgate. On the use of $\aleph$, cf. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis," AJSL, L, 206 f.

³Cf. Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 117-118, etc.

⁴Thureau-Dangin, ibid., p. 88. Luckenbill, op. cit., II, pp. 18-19, 35, 102, 146-147, 184-185; Rogers, op. cit., pp. 150-153.

⁵Cf. S. H. Langdon, Mythology of All Races, V, pp. 30-32, 77-78. W. F. Albright, Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental

The smoke which filled the house was presumably from incense, against which Isaiah inveighs in 1:13, using the very word the Sumerians used.¹ Incense, we know, accompanied the Babylonian New Year fete,² and foreign incense was prohibited to the Hebrews, as we learn in Exodus 30:9.³

It is the plain implication of Isaiah's cry: "Woe is me! For I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" that before this experience he had part in the common practices and experiences of the people, was even now taking part in the syncretistic Yahweh worship which was in reality based on the nature ritual. During this experience he saw the King (𐤒 𐤕 𐤕𐤍), Yahweh,⁴ and was "converted." He was cleansed during the ritual by one of the 𐤍 𐤔 𐤕𐤍 𐤔, as in the Babylonian fete the king and people were cleansed by the priest.⁵ As a result of his "conversion," he received a commis-

Research, No. 39 (1930), p. 4; No. 31 (1928), p. 6; Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 133, statuette with serpent in New Year ritual; R. A. S. MacAlister, Excavations at Gezer (London: John Murray, 1912), II, 399. H. W. Cartwright, "The Iconography of Certain Egyptian Deities," AJSL, XLV, 183-186. A. T. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 440. See also Num. 21:4-9; II Kgs. 18:4. It is not the intention of the writer to press unduly the importance of the 𐤍 𐤔 𐤕𐤍 𐤔 as evidence. Their presence here merely contributes a bit to the whole picture. Isaiah's statement that he has been one of the group who have indulged in pollution (𐤕 𐤔𐤕 ; root is often used to mean "connection with idolatrous worship": cf. Hos. 5:3; 6:10; Psa. 106:39; Ez. 22:4, 6; 20:7; etc.) is the real basis of this interpretation.

¹F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 19; "mituti li-lunim-ma kut-ri-in li-is-si-nu": "that the dead may arise and inhale incense." 𐤍 𐤔𐤕 𐤕𐤍 is used in Is. 1:13.

²Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 122, ll. 21 and 26; pp. 140-142, ll. 347, 356, 392, etc. W. F. Albright, "Tell Beit Mirsim," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 31 (1928), pp. 8-9. C. F. Vellay, op. cit., pp. 130-132. Frazer, op. cit., p. 7.

³Cf. also Hos. 2:15; 11:2; Ez. 8:11; II Kgs. 17:11; 23:5.

⁴Cf. evidence collected by A. R. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 85 ff. that Yahweh's kingship is patterned on nature ritual.

⁵Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 95-97, 117-118.

sion and a message quite at variance with the usual optimism of the cultus. He was to condemn the people's uncleanness, although it was not probable that they would heed and be healed. He was to persist so long as there remained any people to hear.

The "healing" referred to in verse 10 is typical cult terminology,¹ as is the "How long?"² of verse 11, used with reference to the wasting of cities.³ Oaks and terebinths (verse 13) were sacred to cult-worshippers,⁴ and it is tempting to read the verse: "If yet a tenth survive in it, it shall be for burning as a terebinth or as an oak which is in the [gate of] Shalleceth⁵ a pillar among them: the holy seed [חֹרֶץ קִדְשׁ]⁶ its pillar"; but it is probably better to regard this verse as a later corrective to Isaiah's message of doom, as do most commentators.

All these things have the cumulative force of indicating that chapter 6 records the reason for the prophet's change to a thoroughgoing Yahwism and for delivery of his unpopular message. The presence here of this section is for the justification of Isaiah's attitude and message.⁷ Recognition of his previous connection with the dominant cultus was thus given, and the reason

¹Cf. p. 32, n. 3.

²Cf. S. A. B. Mercer, The Religious and Moral Ideas of the Babylonians and Assyrians (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1919), p. 74; also see Syria, XII, Pl. XLI, ll. 45-47.

³Cf. S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 269.

⁴Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 132-133, 140-142. Rogers, op. cit., pp. 123, 161.

⁵Cf. I Chron. 26:16.

⁶It is on this reading possible that the חֹרֶץ קִדְשׁ is a reference to the offspring of the cult marriage, here doomed to extinction by the prophet as he dooms the sacred pillars. Cf. also in this connection, Mal. 2:15.

⁷Cf. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L, 206 f.

for his subsequent condemnation of it. The story of his conversion was doubtless told in order to protect the prophet from the charge of double-mindedness, for he had been known to follow the current cultus prior to this time, and to secure recognition for his message as divine in character.

It is apparent that Isaiah had no faith in ritual to bring about the welfare of the people. He condemned the seasonal celebrations as evidence of religiosity and as a basis of hope for material blessings; as a foil he pointed to morality as the condition of the favor of Yahweh, the real source of prosperity.¹

(f) Gardens, Vineyards, and Sacred Groves

Magical gardens, sown, forced and then as quickly withered, had a definite part in the fertility rites.² To these we have at least two references in Isaiah.

The first of these is Isaiah 17:10-11:

For thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and thou hast not remembered the Rock of thy protection. Therefore thou plantest Adonis gardens [גַּדְנֵי אֲדֹנִיס] ³ and hast sown it [with] shoots [prunings: וְשִׁטְתָּ] ⁴ of a foreigner [גֵּר] ⁵. In the day of thy planting thou enclosest [?] [it], and in the morning thy seed thou makest sprout; [but] the harvest departs in a day of wounding [וְהַקֹּחַ הַזֶּה לִּי יוֹם צָרָה] to be read [וְהַקֹּחַ הַזֶּה לִּי יוֹם צָרָה] and of pain incurable [וְהַקֹּחַ הַזֶּה לִּי יוֹם צָרָה].

Just prior to these verses the prophet has been predicting destruction to Damascus and Israel. He has said that the calamity that overtakes men shall make those that are left turn away

¹Compare Is. 1:11-15 and 1:16-20.

²Cf. Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 194, 204.

³Parallels גֵּר, often used of a foreign deity. Happax use in the Old Testament. נֶעֱמַן is an epithet of Adonis. Cf. Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-185. In Syria, XIV, Pl. XVIII, l. 29, n'mt is used to indicate a sacred or favorable offering.

⁴Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XVIII, l. 9, use of same root.

⁵Word used of foreign deity: Is. 43:12. Deut. 32:16; Jer. 2:25; 3:13; Ps. 44:21; 81:10.

from the Asherim and Hammanim,¹ and have respect for their Maker, the Holy One of Israel, rather than for the images which their own hands have made.² They have previously forgotten the God of their prosperity (salvation), Yahweh, and have indulged in faith in nature worship. The point of this passage is that even as the cult gardens quickly withered away, so shall disappear the prosperity which the people have expected the nature deity (or deities) to bring. Thus he uses the nature-cult imagery to point out both its weakness and the power of Yahweh, but the import of his total message is one of complete rejection of the cult pattern of thought.

The second passage definitely referring to the magical gardens of the nature cults in Judah is Isaiah 1:27:31:

27. Sion shall be ransomed through justice, and those of her that turn [survive: $\eta' \omega$]³ by righteousness. 28. And destruction of transgressors and sinners [shall be] together, and the forsakers of Yahweh shall be consumed. 29. For ye [MT = "they"] shall be ashamed of the oaks [$\eta' \omega$]⁴ which ye have desired, and be abashed because of the gardens [$\eta' \omega$]⁵ which ye have chosen. 30. For ye shall be as an oak dropping its leaves and as a garden which has no water. 31. And the strong one shall be for tow, and his deed for a spark, and they shall kindle, the two of them together, and there shall be no extinguishing [them].

Verses 27 and 28 have often been regarded as late interpolations on the ground of what appear to be references to the exile and because of their apparent eschatological character.⁶

¹Cf. W. F. Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible (Chicago: The Fleming H. Revell Co., 1932), pp. 108-109.

²Is. 17:4-9.

³Dr. W. C. Graham in 1933 at a meeting of the Midwest Branch of the American Oriental Society was the first to call attention to the cultic significance of $\eta' \omega$, a point which this translation does not necessarily emphasize.

⁴Cf. also Is. 6:13. Definitely connected with the nature cultus in Hos. 4:13; Ez. 6:13; Is. 57:5.

⁵Cultic significance of the word is proved by Cant. 4:12, 15, 16; 5:1; 6:2, 11; Is. 65:3; 66:17.

⁶G. H. Box, Isaiah, p. 28.

The sharp distinction between the righteous and sinners makes Gray suspicious that the verses are not the work of Isaiah.¹ Yet that is just the essence of Isaiah's message in chapter 6. Further, there is no need to translate $\eta' \text{ } \text{ב'}$ as "captives" with the LXX and Syriac; the word should be rendered rather in antithetic parallelism to לְבָנִי יְהוָה as "those that turn of her" or even as "those that survive of her."² They shall do so by reason of their righteousness and justice. This thought is quite in line with Isaiah's message, the ideas paralleling Isaiah 1:19-20, and it is also in line with the immediately preceding context. If Isaiah be thought of as characterizing the materialistic nature worshippers by their faith in cultic gardens and the true Yahwists as those who are just and righteous, the passage here comes into perfect unity with verses 21-26. Moreover, these verses are necessary as an introduction to the nature-cult imagery of the concluding verses of this section.

The mixing of persons in verses 29-31 is confusing. LXX consistently uses third person plural, while MT uses consistently second person plural masculine with the exception of לְבָנִי . Either usage is understandable. Consistency should be observed, unity with the preceding verses being somewhat better preserved by the adoption of the LXX reading.³

As noted above, tamarisks, terebinths, and oaks were especially sacred to the nature-cult devotees.⁴

¹Cf. Isaiah, p. 37.

²The root לָבַן has this force. Cf. Is. 6:13; Mic. 2:8; Jer. 15:19; Zech. 9:8; 10:6; Psa. 90:3.

³Translation herewith is based, however, on MT.

⁴Cf. Is. 6:13, p. 65, n. 4; Is. 1:29-30, p. 67, n. 4; also cf. C. F. Vellay, op. cit., pp. 263-289, ten representations of Adonis as trunk of tree. See also Judg. 9:37; Gen. 35:8; Deut. 12:2. Ebeling, op. cit., p. 31, l. 1; p. 47, ll. 9-12; p. 77, l. 21; p. 86, l. 53; p. 93, l. 15; p. 95, l. 46; etc.

Here it is evident that Isaiah's repudiation of the magical gardens as a source of prosperity is definite and complete.

There are also several other references to the fading and withering of vegetation in Isaiah¹ which appear to be based on the nature-cult pattern.

The joys of wine and feasting are everywhere prominent in the life of man, and the vineyard occupied an important place in the fertility cult.² Part of the ritual was the pruning of the vine and the stoning of the field.³ The fruitfulness of the vineyard was cause for rejoicing,⁴ while its failure induced ritual wailing to restore its productiveness.⁵

In Isaiah 32:9-14, translated above,⁶ Isaiah sarcastically bids the women do their ritual weeping for fruitfulness of the vine. There will be cause enough for real tears when destruction and devastation make the loss of crops a grim reality, he says.

Again in Isaiah 5:1-14, Isaiah speaks his message through a parody, apparently, on a song of the harvest of grapes, chanted to the fertility deity⁷ at the Feast of Ingathering.⁸ Isaiah's use of this nature-song as a parable seems to end with verse 6.

¹Is. 15:6; 16:8; 19:5-9; 37:27. See also Is. 24:4-13; 33:9; 34:4.

²Cf. Syria, XIII, Pl. XXVII, ll. 39-58; Pl. XXVI, ll. 34-38; XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 71-72.

³Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XVIII, l. 9 ff. W.C. Graham, AJSL, XIV, 167 ff. Is. 5:2, 6; 18:5-6.

⁴Cf. Is. 5:1-7; 16:10; Judg. 21:19 f. Syria, XII, Pl. XL, ll. 1-19; XIII, Pl. XXVI, ll. 27-38.

⁵Is. 16:8-9; 32:9-14. Syria, XII, Pls. XL, XLI, ll. 22-47.

⁶Cf. p. 49.

⁷ ṭīṭ being a term of endearment, referring to the fertility deity.

⁸Cf. interpretation of W. C. Graham, AJSL, XLV, 167-178.

With verse 7 he begins the application of his message to the local situation, saying that Israel and Judah, the vineyard of Yahweh, has borne, instead of expected justice and righteousness, the bitter fruit of bloodshed and oppression. The verses which follow, at least through verse 14, continue to make application of the parable to the social life of the times. As the logical sequel to his figure Isaiah declares various groups to be condemned because of their materialism and selfishness, born of their devotion to the cultus. In the 8th verse following, the prophet condemns the building up of a great landed class at the expense of the poor. In the 11th and 12th verses he condemns senseless drinking and indulgence in liquor. That these practices result from the cultic point of view is indicated both by verse 12 itself where it is said that those so engaged ought to have beheld the activity of Yahweh and have seen his works, and by verse 14 where the prophet states that the Underworld, descent to which preceded the return of the deity in the nature rites, will not only engulf the dead god but will enlarge itself to take in his devotees as well.

The word *נָחַץ* in verse 13, often rendered "go into exile" need not be so translated. It may mean "go naked"¹ or simply "disappear" or "be removed." The prophet is saying that the people are perishing because of an inadequate world-view. They do not realize what sort of world they live in and are being destroyed by their materialism, greed, and indulgence.

It appears also probable that the subsequent verses through verse 24, instead of being a group of fragments joined by an editor who perceived that various lines begin with *וְיִן*,²

¹Cf. W. C. Graham, *AJSL*, XLV, 173-177.

²So G. B. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 88 f.

are the logical continuation of the prophet's thought, since the passage throughout expresses opposition to those who are proud, oppressing the poor, and rejecting Yahweh's teaching. Throughout Isaiah seems to be making the point through the use of the parable of the vineyard that the anti-social attitudes induced by the materialism of the culture pattern result in destruction and defeat even of the very ends which they seek.

It seems to the writer psychologically very improbable that Isaiah, on whatever occasion the parable was delivered, would have concluded with verse 7, since he must have been thinking in terms of specific wrongs which he wished to denounce and since his hearers would certainly not have been deeply impressed if he had ceased with only a single general statement of the application of his parable.

Certain passages refer to sacred groves,¹ such as are known to have been connected with the nature religions.² Two of them in particular, Isaiah 10:18-19 and 37:24, are especially interesting:

Isaiah 10:18. And the glory [כְּבוֹד] of his [the Assyrian king's] forest and of his vineyard of El [אֱלֹהֵי] shall he [Yahweh] destroy, both its symbolism and its actuality [אֲשֶׁר-וְעַד! קִנְיָן: soul and body]. And it shall happen [be] as the cessation [בְּסֻמָּם: "ceasing" or "wasting away"] of one who wails [נִדָּן].³ 19. And the remnant of trees of his forest shall be few, and [= so that] a child [יָלֵד] may count them.

Isaiah 37:24. By the hand of thy servants thou [the Assyrian King] hast reproached my Lord [יְיָ]: probably Yahweh is meant here] and hast said, 'With a multitude of chariots I have gone up the height [רֹם] of the mountains

¹Is. 29:17; 32:15. Cf. also Mic. 3:12; Jer. 26:18.

²S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 289. E. O. James, "Initiatory Rituals," in S. H. Hooke, Myth and Ritual, p. 169. D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, II, 74-75. Ez. 28:13 f; 31:8 ff.

³The translation is difficult. Suggestion is made in line with what seems to be the general sense of the passage and without doing any violence to MT.

and the extremities [**יִרְכָּתִי**] of Lebanon. And I have cut the tallest of its cedars, choicest in its top, and have gone to the height [**מְרוֹם**; possibly read **קִמְיוֹ** with II Kings 19:23] of its remotest part [**קִצְוֹ**: lit., "end"], the forest of its vineyard of El [**בְּרִמְיוֹ**].

In verse 19 of Isaiah 10, it is possible that the "trees" of the "forest" are the Assyrian soldiers.¹ But in verse 18 the reference to **בְּרִמְיוֹ** seems to make it certain that this cannot be the interpretation throughout. The section from which this excerpt is taken seems to prophesy that, after Assyria has been Yahweh's instrument of punishment upon Judah, Yahweh will destroy the prized sacred grove of the egotistic king. Not only will he destroy the actual grove, but he will bring to an end its subversive influence. The prestige of the king's nature religion as well as his actual grove will be destroyed. The destruction will come about as suddenly as the cessation of ritual wailing when the god returns.

A study of the words used in this passage is interesting. In view of the frequent use of **כְּבוֹד** to indicate a divine presence,² it is an attractive interpretation that the very presence of the nature deity will be made of no effect. This possibility is increased by its parallelism with **בְּרִמְיוֹ**, which is very probably a reference to a sacred vineyard or grove. Usage of **בְּרִמְיוֹ** where it cannot possibly refer to Mt. Carmel is interesting as pointing to a translation as "vineyard or garden of El."³ It is possible that the dagesh in the **ל** may be explained as due to the coalescing of two original words, **בְּרִי**

¹This interpretation is not necessary, but it is not contradictory to the nature-cult imagery.

²Cf. Is. 6:3; Ps. 19:2; 29:3; 104:31.

³Dr. W. C. Graham first suggested to the writer that this could be a term for the sacred vineyard which the Ras Shamra tablets show was ritually cultivated. Cf. his "Recent Light on the Cultural Origins of the Hebrews," JR, XIV, 322-323.

and אֵל.¹ This is made the more plausible by the use of אֵל in II Kings 19:23 and in Isaiah 37:24, and by the frequent occurrence in the Ras Shamra ritual of the equivalent expression, "sd El" - "field of God."²

We are still further aided in this interpretation by reflecting that mountain forests and groves were evidently not common in Assyria,³ although several Assyrian kings have left record of planting sacred groves and vineyards.⁴ and by realizing that no ordinary forest or vineyard would be inveighed against or known of by a Hebrew prophet far removed from Assyria. This view is clinched by the expression "כִּלְכֵּל וְכִלְכֵּל" meaning "entirely" but capable of translation without any distortion of idea as "spiritually and physically, " and thus "completely." The case is further enhanced by the expression "כִּלְכֵּל וְכִלְכֵּל." The latter word, a happax in the Old Testament, may be related to the Assyrian "nasasu," meaning to "lament or wail." In a forceful figure the prophet is saying that the destruction of the Assyrian king and the nature-cult shrine in which he trusts will come about as suddenly as the ritual lament ceases when the god is said to have

¹Cf. J. M. P. Smith, "The Use of the Divine Name as Superlatives," AJS, XLV, 212, who notes that "kasap ilani," originally silver dedicated to the gods, becomes an expression for the "finest silver." See also use of קדש in Lev. 2:14; Is. 32:16; 16:10; 29:17; Jer. 4:26; 48:33. Further analogy is provided by קדש: Is. 29:1, 2, 7; II Sam. 23:20; by שמים, used of cloud of theophany: Ex. 20:18; I Kgs. 8:12; Deut. 4:11; 5:12; Ps. 18:10; 97:2; Job 22:13; Zeph. 1:15; Ez. 34:12; Joel 2:2. Cf. also J. M. P. Smith, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 210.

²Cf. Syria, XII, Pl. XXXVIII, ll. 6-7; Pl. XLI, l. 26; Vol. XIII, Pl. XXVI, l. 23; vol. XIV, Pl. XVIII, l. 28.

³Cf. A. T. Olmstead, History of Assyria (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1923), pp. 10-12.

⁴Cf., e. g., D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, II, p. 171, sec. 399; p. 150, sec. 333.

returned. This is a clear illustration of Isaiah's rejection of the philosophy of materialism, on which the Assyrian imperialism was based.

The second passage, Isaiah 37:24, while it occurs in the historical appendix to the book of Isaiah, is reported almost identically in II Kings 19:23 as the message of Isaiah to Hezekiah against the Assyrian king, Sennacherib. Here we have quoted the bragging of the king that he had reached the קִרְיַן of Lebanon. This word, as noted earlier, is frequently used in the Ras Shamra ritual to refer to the seat of the gods.¹ יְרֵכְתִי refers to the mythical meeting-place of the gods in Isaiah 14:13. It may very well do so here also. We note in this passage that the פְּרָקְלִי is at the remotest part of the Lebanon.

Because the Assyrian king had searched out and found these shrines in Syria, had visited them and thus knew the secrets of the local deities, he reasoned that he was invincible, that the lands of these gods would have to capitulate to him. But the prophet says that in spite of this accomplishment the king has reckoned without considering the might of Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, whose power is not thus to be controlled.²

(g) Music of the Cult

The nature religions combined with their essential utilitarian character a high esthetic appreciation. Music was a definite part of the ritual,³ and that of the pipe or flute seems to

¹Cf. p. 36, n. 7; p. 38, n. 4. Ras Shamra uses "mrīm Špn." Cf. Is. 14:13.

²Subsequent verses bear out this interpretation. Cf. Is. 37:26-29.

³Cf. J. G. Frazer, op. cit., p. 7. C. Vellay, op. cit., pp. 130-132.

have been especially characteristic.¹ In Isaiah 30:29 we have reference to this music as accompanying processional worship.² In Isaiah 5:12 we learn that the harp, tabret, lute, and pipe accompanied the feasting of those who had no regard to the deeds of Yahweh.³

We have earlier referred to Isaiah 5:1 ff. as a parody on the songs of the nature cultus at the Feast of Ingathering.⁴ Such songs and rejoicing accompanied the return of the dead god and the assurance of good crops.⁵ Such ritualistic acts were evidently used to ward off danger and to guarantee prosperity in general, as we learned from Isaiah 30:27-33:

27. Behold, the name [DQ = presence]⁶ of Yahweh comes from afar, burning [in] anger and heavy with portent [ַדָּבָר ְנֶאֱמָר]; his lips are full of indignation and his tongue as a devouring fire. 28. And his breath is as a torrent overflowing [ַדָּבָר ְנֶאֱמָר]⁷ that divides unto the neck,⁸ making [lit., "to make"] nations move to and fro in a mock [false]

¹Cf. M. I. Hussey, "Some Sumero-Babylonian Hymns," *AJSL*, XXIII, 151; Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 130, 163, 184-185. Peters, *op. cit.*, *JBL*, XXXVI, 103; F. A. Vanderburgh, *Sumerian Hymns*, pp. 18-19: "ina u-me ilu Dumu-zi el-la-an-ni malil abnu ukni abnusamt1." ["On the day of Tammuz play for me on the flute of uknu and samtu."] Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, xliii, 1. Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-63, 93-99, 110-111, 121-125, 129-148. Compare Is. 5:12; 30:29; Jer. 48:36; I Sam. 10:5.

²Quoted on p. 76.

³Cf. discussion on p. 69 ff. for explanation of the relation of this passage to the nature cultus.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵ ַדָּבָר used in such connection: Is. 5:1; 30:29; 23:16; Cant. 1:1; Ps. 45:1. For ַדָּבָר so used: Is. 16:10; 9:2; Lev. 23:40; Deut. 12:7, 12, 18; 27:7; Hos. 9:1; Joel 2:23; Cant. 3:11; II Sam. 6:12; also *Syria*, XII, Pl. XL, 1. 14; XIII, Pl. XXVII, 11. 82, 97.

⁶Usage of this word in this sense is found in Ex. 20:24; II Sam. 7:13; Deut. 12:5, 11 and elsewhere.

⁷Isaianic usage. Cf. Is. 28:15, 18. See p. 46 above.

⁸Isaianic language. Cf. almost identical usage of the figure of the overflowing stream in Is. 8:8.

wave-ceremony [וַיִּנָּחֵם]¹ and a bridle [וַיִּנָּחֵם]² causing to err upon the cheeks [or "jaws"?] of the people.
 29. The song shall be to you [the Hebrews] as [in] the night [when] is consecrated the feast [וַיִּנָּחֵם : iance or festival], and gladness of heart as one going with the flute [וַיִּנָּחֵם], to come into the mountain of Yahweh, unto the Rock of Israel.
 30. And Yahweh shall make [you] hear the authority of his voice and shall make [you] see the descent [וַיִּנָּחֵם]³ of his arm in the raging of anger, and flame of devouring fire, cloud-burst [shattering storm], and flood of rain and hailstones.
 31. For because of the voice of Yahweh Assyria shall be dismayed [shattered]; with the rod [וַיִּנָּחֵם] shall he [Yahweh] smite [וַיִּנָּחֵם]. 32. And every waving [lit., "passing-over, stroke": וַיִּנָּחֵם] of staff determined upon [וַיִּנָּחֵם : "fixed, appointed, established"] which Yahweh shall put [וַיִּנָּחֵם : lit., "cause to rest"] upon him shall come to pass; with [accompanied by] timbrels and with harps and with wave-loaves [וַיִּנָּחֵם]⁴ he [the Assyrian king] shall fight against it. 33. But [וַיִּנָּחֵם]⁵ determined [וַיִּנָּחֵם : "set in order, arranged"] from the beginning is Tophet⁶; even for the king is it prepared. It is made deep; it is made wide; its wall

¹Lit., "waving of worthlessness." The usual translation as "sieve" not only has no verification, as its usage here is a happax, but also is not in unity with the figures following.

²Translation "bridle" seems demanded in Ps. 32:9 and Job 30:11. In Job 41:5 it may be so translated. The figure does not seem apropos in Is. 30:28. In view of the other nature-cult figures employed in the passage, it is attractive to translate it "blow," linking the passage with the ritual smiting of the king in the Babylonian ritual: cf. Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147, but since the root is of uncertain origin no definite conclusion can be reached.

³Continuity of verses 27 and 28 with 30 is evident in ideas: וַיִּנָּחֵם, וַיִּנָּחֵם, and וַיִּנָּחֵם.

⁴The change involves the omission of only one letter ו. The rendering "battles of waving" makes no sense, while that of bread (loaves) of waving is definitely parallel to the mock ceremony spoken of in vs. 28 in idea, and completes the sense of the sentence in excellent fashion. Cf. Lev. 23:17, 20; II Kgs. 4:42. These passages definitely link this with fertility offerings. Cf. G. H. Box, *Isaiah*, p. 144.

⁵For this adversative usage of ו, see Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Grammar*, Sec. 163, 1; also Gen. 18:15; 19:2.

⁶It is noticeable that the cult of burning always appears in the Old Testament in close connection with the nature-cult worship. Further the ritual seems to have been that of royalty. Cf. II Kgs. 23:10; Jer. 7:31-32; 19:4-6, 11-14; 32:29, 34-35; II Chr. 28:2-4; 33:1-6; Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5. By reading וַיִּנָּחֵם for וַיִּנָּחֵם by a simple change of vocalization, it is apparent that the "passing through the fire" was "for the king," i.e., in his place or stead. Apparently, such sacrifice was offered for a prosperous outcome of affairs and may have been a reference to ritual smiting.

of fire and wood [lit., "trees"] he is making great [הָרָהֳרָה for הָרָהֳרָה].¹ The breath of Yahweh as a torrent of brimstone is burning in it.

Besides referring to the music of the cultus and its wave-ceremonies in verses 28, 29 and 32, this passage furnishes an excellent example of how a knowledge of the pattern of the thinking of the nature cults brings into unity a passage of seeming fragments and how by noting attitudes toward the cult one may judge whether a section of biblical literature belongs to the reputed author or not.

One notes as pointing to Isaianic authorship the destruction from Yahweh predicted for Assyria,--destruction determined upon from the beginning.² Again the indignation and anger are reminiscent of Isaiah 10:16-17. The overflowing torrent recalls Isaiah 28:15, 18 and the reaching of the stream to the neck reminds one of Isaiah 8:8. The thought is a logical continuation of Isaiah 30:1-17, where the prophet has urged the people to quiet trust in Yahweh. If they will but trust him, they will see Yahweh bring about the destruction of Assyria and its trusted magic ritual. The waving ceremonies we have earlier seen were conducted to ward off the overflowing torrent.³ The smiting arm of Yahweh is also a familiar Isaianic figure.⁴ The assertion of the supremacy of Yahweh is quite in accord with Isaiah's conception.⁵

Still more striking is the unity that results from a knowledge of the nature-cult imagery used. To begin with Isaiah

¹A simple change in vocalization, no consonant changes being made.

²Vs. 33; compare Is. 37:26-29 and 10:12 f.

³Cf. Is. 28:14 ff.

⁴Vs. 30; compare Is. 5:25; 9:11, 12, 16, 20; 10:4.

⁵Cf., e.g., Is. 6:3.

informs the people who have heard him say "Rest back on Yahweh" that God's presence is at hand, heavy with portent. The 28th verse shows us that it is nations and peoples that Yahweh is going to deal with. Then adopting boldly the cultus terminology in his usual sarcastic manner, Isaiah informs his listeners that Yahweh will perform a mock wave-ceremony with nations as the magic pawns. The Hebrews can then rejoice really as they are wont to do in the processional ceremonies of the cultus. For they will see and recognize Yahweh's power in the destruction he brings on Assyria. For every motion of waving determined on in the mock ceremony which Yahweh is putting on Assyria shall really come to pass.¹ With timbrels and harps and wave-offerings of the nature-cult ritual the king of Assyria will fight against Yahweh's mock "spell." But it will be useless, for Assyria's end was determined from the beginning. Tophet is prepared, a trench of burning, probably connected with the nature-cult ceremonies.² Consumed will the king be in the midst of his ritual to induce prosperity.

The reference to Tophet and the trench recalls that in the New Year ritual at Babylon a sacrifice of a bull was prepared in a trench, and the king was ritually important in applying the flame.³ If the reference here is to this practice, as seems possible, it is evidently meant that the king is now the "burnt-offering" instead of the official at the pyre.⁴ Yahweh here functions as the kindler,--not the king, who becomes the sacri-

¹For the ceremony of ritual smiting as presaging real smiting, cf. II Kgs. 13:14-19.

²Cf. n. 6 on text of passage above, p. 76.

³Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 145-146.

⁴Cf., however, A. B. Ehrlich, Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908), IV, 112.

ficed bull.

Thus does Isaiah dispose of Assyria - the dominant imperialist power, her king - the source of her dominance, and the practices of the supporting cultus. They are all consumed before the great power of Yahweh, a message consistent with all we know of the prophet's conception of his God.

(h) Cultic Food

Our attention is first drawn to Isaiah 7:15 and 22:

15. Curds [חֶמְצָה] and honey [דְּבַשׁ] he [Immanu-El] shall eat in order to know [יָדַעַתִּי]¹ to refuse the evil and choose the good. 22. And it shall come to pass that from the abundance of the production [lit., "making"] of milk he shall eat curds [חֶמְצָה]. For curds and honey [דְּבַשׁ] he shall eat,--every one left in the midst of the land.

Much discussion has centered upon this chapter. There is not time or space here to go into all the questions involved which have been treated at length by others. Briefly it will suffice here to say that the interpretation advanced by W. C. Graham² seems best to fit the text. According to it, the prophet, disgusted with Ahaz' policy of seeking aid from Assyria and his lack of faith in Yahweh, calls out that the cult woman (אִשָּׁתִּי) shall give birth to a son who will be called "God with us!", representing Ahaz' faith in the nature-cult magic. This child shall partake of curds and honey as a magic guarantee of his rectitude in determining good fortune for the people. Even before this ritual takes place, the present danger indeed will be over, indicating the fallacy of calling in Assyria. But then the results of hasty action in calling in Assyria will be evident as real misfortune. The people who are left will be reduced to the

¹Cf. for usage of יָדַעַתִּי, Brown, Driver and Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, ad. loc., sec. 7 (a).

²Cf. AJSL, L, 206 ff.

magic fare indeed,--will revert to the simple fare of nomadic life. So in ill fortune they will literally have "to eat their folly,"--curds and honey, the symbols of their faith in the brute force of Assyria and in nature-cult magic.

The magical properties of curds and honey were evidently believed to induce in Immanu-El the knowledge of good and evil fortune associated with the "fixing of the fates" in connection with the New Year fertility rites.¹

This association of curds and honey with nature-cult ritual is well attested. In the New Year rites at Babylon honey was offered to Bel.² A Tammuz text reads "Honey is his bright-red blood" in a list of equations of substances with the various parts of the god's body.³ Another hymn to Tammuz asserts that when the goddess has endowed the dead god with new life "there shall be eating, there shall be eating of pure food, there shall be pouring out of honey and curdled milk, there shall be drinking of wine of grain and strong wine."⁴ Honey was very frequently used in the ritual of Babylonia, and curds are often mentioned in close proximity.⁵ The words used for these ritual elements are

¹Cf. W. C. Graham, *AJSL*, L, 208-209. Also H. Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1905), p. 215. Gen. 2:9; 3:5, 22 with reference to "good and evil" as fate or destiny. Also Num. 24:16; Is. 14:13; 47:11; Deut. 30:15, 19; Lam. 1:15.

²Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 142, 145. Bel is spoken of as the one "who fixes the destinies of all the gods, who gives the holy sceptre to the king who fears you," p. 134. Beltia is besought: "To the king who fears you, fix his destiny, p. 135.

³Ebeling, *op. cit.*, I, 47, l. 8.

⁴Cf. F. A. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Lamentations," *AJSL*, XXVII, 317.

⁵Ebeling, *op. cit.*, 13, l. 14; 65, l. 39; 68, l. 24; 72, l. 6; 89, l. 30; 105, l. 39; 112, l. 40; 113, l. 1; 117, l. 12; 161, l. 6; 104, l. 20; 103, l. 11; 75, ll. 19, 24. Words used: hemētu and dišpu.

the same as in the above Isaianic passages.

Honey and milk are mentioned in the nature-cult songs of Canticles.¹ Honey was prohibited as an offering on an altar among the Jews.² It is hardly probable that such a prohibition would be made unless the practice were commonly associated with a type of religion frowned upon.

Besides these examples of the association of curds and honey with divine properties, we learn that in the Rigveda honey was regarded as of divine origin.³ It was used among the Hindus at critical seasons,--such, for example, as birth, initiation, and marriage--to drive away evil spirits,⁴ a usage directly analogous to that implied in Isaiah 7:15. The infant Zeus was reared in Crete, according to mythology, on milk and honey.⁵ Even in the early Christian church, honey and milk were held to suggest consecration, and a portion was placed in the mouth of the newly baptized, symbolizing doubtless the entry of divine life into the initiate.⁶ Again in Teutonic mythology honey was the chief ingredient of divine drink. There are many other associations of these food elements with productivity and fertility.⁷

The point to the Isaianic passage above is that food, thought to furnish aid through its divine and magical qualities,

¹Cf. 5:1; 4:11.

²Lev. 2:11.

³Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, VI, 770, sec. 7.

⁴Ibid., sec. 6.

⁵H. Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-judischen Eschatologie, p. 213.

⁶Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, VI, p. 770, sec. 6.

⁷Cf. Deut. 26:15; 32:13-14; Job 20:17; 29:6; Jer. 11:5; Ez. 20:6, 15; Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3. F. A. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Lamentations," AJSL, XXVII, 317.

has been turned by the prophet into a symbol of the break-down of the current ritual and its supporting philosophy and of the end of the prosperous conditions which that ritual was seeking to perpetuate. Thus picturesquely and with telling effect did Isaiah turn sarcastically upon the vaunted efficacy of the cult ritual.

In Isaiah 5:11-12, a passage full of nature-cult imagery, the prophet takes his customary sarcastic attitude toward the wine-drinking which was definitely associated with the cultus ritual.¹ He objected to this, not because he felt that all drinking was evil, but because it was indulged in to excess without thought of the weightier matters of government and of the real welfare of the people. The drinking was symbolic,--a part of the system of glorifying production and putting emphasis on quantity. The leaders were "mighty in drinking wine [וְגִבּוֹרִים לְשָׁתוֹת יַיִן]"² but had no time or energy to devote to bringing about stable conditions within society.³ They had no need to attend to such matters, doubtless, they thought. The ritual would guarantee prosperity.

Isaiah's retort was that all this was bringing rather destruction and dissolution upon the nation.

(1) Ceremonial Dress

Isaiah 3:16-4:1 deserves attention in this connection:

¹Ebeling, *op. cit.*, 47, l. 13; 32, l. 18; 72, l. 6; 63, l. 7; 65, l. 46; 113, l. 5; 112, l. 44. Cant. 5:1; 2:4; 8:2; Hos. 4:11; 9:4; 7:5; Deut. 14:26; 32:33; Is. 16:10; 22:13; 28:7. Cf. also Syria, XIV, Pl. XVIII, ll. 6, 72.

²Is. 5:22. The sarcastic reference to the nobles and rulers as "heroes of drinking wine" is quite in Isaiah's vein, and doubtless refers to these devotees of the nature-deity, one of whose epithets was "Hero" (cf. discussion under Cult Figures), as mock "heroes" indeed. See also Is. 28:7.

³Is. 5:23.

16. And Yahweh has said: "Because the daughters of Sion are high and walk with outstretching of necks and cōling of eyes, - with walking and tripping, they walk and make a [rattling ?] ¹ הִלְכֻן וְהִלְכֻן with their feet, 17. then Adonai will הִפֹּךְ ["pour out on" ?] ² the crown of the daughters of Sion, and Yahweh will make naked their secret parts [הִפְתִּיחַ]. ³ 18. In that day Adonai will take away the beauty of the [anklets ?] הַכְּסָפִים ⁴ and the [suns = amulets ?] הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ ⁵ and the crescents, 19. the pendants [הַכְּסָפִים] ⁶, the bracelets, and the veils. 20. the headdress [הַכְּסָפִים] ⁷ and the step-chains [הַכְּסָפִים] ⁸ and the girdle [הַכְּסָפִים] ⁹ and the perfume-boxes [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹⁰ and the charms [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹¹ 21. the signet-rings and rings of the nose [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹² 22. the robes of state and over-tunic [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹³ and the cloaks [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹⁴ and the purses [הַכְּסָפִים] ¹⁵ 23. the lace-garments ¹⁶ and linen garments and the turbans and the

¹Usage in Prov. 7:22 uncertain also. Use here as verb is a happax in the Old Testament.

² הִפֹּךְ is uncertain in meaning; parallelism with עָרָה requires a meaning "to make bare."

³Meaning uncertain. I Kings 7:50 uses word as equivalent to "hinge." The root הִפְתִּיחַ has a meaning "to entice or seduce." Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*

⁴The passage of Prov. 7:22 associates the word with prostitution.

⁵A happax in the Old Testament.

⁶Cf. Judg. 8:26. Root used in Cant. 4:11; 5:5, 13; Prov. 5:3.

⁷Garb of priest and bridegroom; opposed to mourning. Cf. Is. 61:10; Ez. 24:17, 23; 44:18; Ex. 39:28.

⁸Chains probably for inducing a processional gait. Root used in Judg. 5:4; Ps. 68:8; II Sam. 6:13; Gen. 49:22.

⁹"Something bound around," parallel to ornaments for a bride: cf. Jer. 2:32; Is. 49:18.

¹⁰Probably in the form of a serpent, associated with the fertility cult. Cf. H. W. Cartwright, "The Iconography of Certain Egyptian Deities," *AJSL*, XLV, 183-184. R. A. S. MacAlister, *Excavations at Gezer*, II, 415, 449-453.

¹¹Cf. Hos. 2:15; Gen. 35:4.

¹²A happax in the Old Testament.

¹³This is probably the correct translation; cf. Ruth 3:15.

¹⁴Cf. II Kgs. 5:23.

¹⁵ הַכְּסָפִים = something exposing or making bare. Uncertain meaning.

veils.¹ 24. And it shall come to pass that there shall be instead of spice [$\square \psi \alpha$ = sweet odor]² rottenness; and instead of a girdle a rope; instead of ornamented coiffure baldness, and instead of a fine robe a girding of sackcloth, brand instead of beauty. 25. Thy men [$\eta : \eta \psi$] by the sword shall fall; and thy heroes [$\eta \eta \eta \eta \eta$] in battle. 26. Her gates shall weep and mourn and plundered shall she sit upon the ground [earth]. 4:1. And seven women shall seize upon one man in that day, saying, "Our [own] bread will we eat and our [own] garments will we wear; only let thy name be called unto us; remove our disgrace [reproach]."

This passage follows upon Isaiah 3:14-15 in which the prophet condemns the rulers and upper classes for despoiling the poor, using terms directly from the nature rites,³ implying that the cultus is the basis of the spoliation of the poor.⁴ Isaiah saw that it is one's philosophy that governs his action, and that a cultus that emphasized the importance of production and thus of material things could not but eventuate in cruelty to the masses when the few came into dominant power through the supposed efficacy of their office in bringing about prosperity.

Isaiah 3:16-4:1 is joined to Isaiah 3:14-15 by } converse which is equivalent to "moreover" or "further." It is therefore in the light of what has preceded that Isaiah continues his arraignment, this time singling out the women of the upper class as the targets for a sarcastic tirade against their finery. The list of articles of apparel that follows is unique in the Old Testament. Why should the prophet have gone to such an extreme?

¹Cf. Cant. 5:7.

²Cf. Cant. 4:10, 14, 16; 5:1, 13; 6:2; 8:14.

³Cf. discussion of these terms, p. 34 above.

⁴The cultus exalted the rulers as the source of the welfare of the people. Cf. A. R. Johnson, op. cit., p. 73 ff. This contributed to the exploitation of the masses. The relation of the cultus to the economic status of the people is also clearly brought out in Amos 2:8 and Jer. 3:24. The economic drain necessitated by the ritual at Ras Shamra is likewise instructive. The sacrifice of seventy each of wild oxen, sheep, rams, mountain goats, and asses was necessary for the revival of Alein-Baal. Cf. Syria, XV, p. 226 f, ll. 18 ff.

Anathematizers of women's fashions have not indeed been without representation in modern times, yet the majority of modern preachers do not criticize women's dress primarily because of personal taste. What they aim at in their criticism is rather the underlying philosophy of life which is felt to be opposed to the best interest of society. And so also we may be sure Isaiah was not giving vent to a mere personal feeling when he so sarcastically predicted doom upon these fine ladies. Such a view of his message is especially convincing when we reflect that all of life was a religious matter to an extent hard for Occidentals to realize.¹ The social occasions of that day one would expect by the very nature of the case to be cultus occasions. By heaping sarcasm upon the women's finery, the prophet was really belittling the cultus.

Certain internal evidence bears out this contention. Isaiah 3:16-4:1 becomes very interesting when one compares the articles of dress with those of the nature cults. Although the list may have been expanded by an editor,² we may remember that the satirical effect, characteristic of Isaiah, of necessity is heightened by the extreme length of the list. As we have observed in remarking on the text, many of the words used for these articles of apparel are happax legomena. Yet, the presence in the list of five or six articles with definite cult associations³ makes us feel certain that the prophet is satirizing the dependence for material welfare placed in ritually correct attire, especially by the women. We recall that Ishtar, on her descent to Arallu, was

¹Cf. p. 13, n. 1.

²Cf. G. H. Box, Isaiah, p. 38; also summary of G. B. Gray, Isaiah, I, 70-71.

³Cf. notes on the passage, pp. 83-84 above.

stripped of the crown for her head, of ear pendants, of chains for her neck, of ornaments of her bosom, of her girdle set with birth-stones, of bracelets for arms and legs, and of her breech-cloth, all of which are mentioned here.¹ Further, these ornaments have been found on mother-goddess statuettes unearthed at Gezer. Bracelets, anklets, necklaces, ear-rings, chains, pendants, amulets, and veils have been thus discovered.² It is to be noted also that braided hair and wigs were worn by the figurines that have been found.³ This makes still more effective Isaiah's pungent remarks about "baldness instead of well-set hair."⁴

Critical scholarship has often regarded verses 18-23 as an editorial expansion mainly because of the prose nature of the list and the introductory phrase, $\text{X} \text{I} \text{N} \text{Q} \text{I} \text{' } \text{Q}$, which has been generally regarded as the mark of late messianism. As to the prosaic character of these verses, the contrast of prose with poetry very much heightens the sarcasm of the prophet's message. Again, while some passages introduced by "on that day" are doubtless late in origin, the expression can no longer be dogmatically regarded as indicative of an exilic or post-exilic period. That such a criterion should never have been adopted as universal in its application is readily recognized when one remembers that Amos inveighs against the dominant dictum that the "day of Yahweh" will

¹Cf. R. W. Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125. It must be admitted, however, that the words used to refer to these articles in the Babylonian literature differ in root from the Hebrew.

²Cf. R. A. S. MacAlister, *Excavation at Gezer*, II, 413-414.

³Cf. Elihu Grant, "Excavations at Beth Shemesh," *Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research*, IX (1927-1928), 3-4; R. A. S. MacAlister, *op. cit.*, II, 413. W. F. Albright, "Tell Beit Mirsim," *Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 31 (1928), p. 8. Compare Is. 3:24. Cf. also H. W. Cartwright, *AJSL*, XLV, 189.

⁴Is. 3:24.

tampered with at this point. In view of the agreement of the Greek and Old Latin in detail and the resulting smoothness of thought, they must be accepted as preferable at this point to a disjointed Hebrew text. "The most beautiful son" who is loved by the women and perishes can scarcely be other than the dying god, - perhaps represented in the rites by the king. He and all Sion's "Heroes"¹ shall perish.

Thus is the doom predicted for the fine ladies carried to a fitting climax by the statement that the king, the nobles, and with them the whole philosophy of life of their trusted nature cultus will be destroyed.

The final picture is of Sion "sitting"² on the ground in utter despair, the magical mourning having become real lamentation. The use of the second person singular feminine in verse 25 in contrast with the earlier reference to the "daughters of Sion" is to be explained as an easy transition from the "daughters of Sion" as a group to a personification of Sion itself.³ When this discrediting of the cultus is realized through defeat, seven of these women, doubtless unmarried temple women, devotees of the cultus and previously protected by their position, will seek the status of married women in order to protect themselves. As discredited prostitutes, no longer "sacred" in the eyes of the public, they would otherwise be at the mercy of the changed situation and whatever the new dominant order should choose to do with them.

¹An epithet of Tammuz. Cf. ad loc.: Cult Figures.

²Cf. W. C. Graham, "Notes on the Interpretation of Micah 1:10-16," AJSL, XLVII, 238 f. C. F. Vellay, op. cit., pp. 263-289. Of 99 representations of Adonis in ancient statuary and painting listed by Vellay, 37 of the mother-goddess are seated and 19 of Adonis.

³It is doubtless unwise to press the attractive interpretation that this shows the domination of this cultus in Jerusalem.

So Isaiah ends the section with a statement of the pitiable condition to which the nature-cult philosophy will bring its chief devotees as well as the nation.

It is possible that the figures of Isaiah 1:18 are based on the red ceremonial garb of the nature cults:¹

Come, now, and let us join argument, saith Yahweh: If your sins are as scarlet [*ḥiṣṣi*],² can they be made white as snow? If they are like scarlet, shall they be as wool?

If this be a reference to these garments,³ Isaiah is saying in effect: "If you traffic with nature-cultism, can you really say that you are guiltless?" This is quite consistent with Isaiah's opposition to syncretism and may be another expression of sarcasm.

(j) The Lifting of the Hand

The lifting of the hands to beseech favor of the nature deities was very common in the ritual.⁴ That this motion had a magical value is indicated in various ways. As an example, we find that even the statuettes made especially for the New Year ceremonies at Babylon were fashioned with hands raised imploring the favor of Nabu, evidently being used in the ritual of "fixing

¹Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 133, ritual statuettes clothed in red in New Year fete at Babylon. W. F. Albright, "Tell Beit Mirsim," Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 31 (1928) p. 10; Frazer, op. cit., p. 7. Rogers, op. cit., p. 130: "clothe Tammuz with red garment." Cf. Is. 14:11.

²Cf. use in Josh. 2:18; Jer. 4:30; Cant. 4:3; Gen. 38:28 f; Lev. 14:4-7, 49-53; Num. 19:2, 6.

³That cultic garments were worn by the Baalists is evident from II Kgs. 10:18-27, especially verse 22.

⁴Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 111, l. 20; p. 134, l. 220; p. 136, ll. 282-283. Rogers, op. cit., p. 147, l. 49; p. 167-168, ll. 39-47; p. 174, l. 79; p. 189, l. 11. F. Martin, op. cit., p. 220, ll. 7, 11; p. 224, ll. 7, 16. S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 267, l. 32. F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 12, 15. D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, I, 296; II, 332.

the fates" for the coming year.¹ It is apparent from the Ras Shamra ritual that Mot strove to retain the supremacy over Alein-Baal and that the women were ritually necessary to determine whether Mot or Alein-Baal should rule, as is indicated in their statement: "It is we who make bounteous the outstretching of thy hand."² The corollary of this is that so long as his hand was raised, he was in authority, i.e., events were favorable to him. From Babylonian literature again, we learn that "when you raise your hands to the gods, they will hear your prayer."³ There are many other illustrations of the magical favorable significance of the upward motion of the hand or of a rod held in the hand, in the nature-cult literature.⁴

Likewise, in the Old Testament, we find evidence of belief in the magical efficacy of raised hands. Moses lifted the curse from Pharaoh "by spreading forth his hands unto Yahweh."⁵ In the classic tale of the struggle of Israel against the Amalekites, the Hebrews prevailed as long as Moses held up his hand containing the rod of God,⁶ i.e., holding up the hand insured success and the validity of Moses' authority. Psalm 10:12 prays that God may lift up his hand in bringing relief and blessing to the poor man. There are many other references to securing the favor of God by

¹Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., p. 133, ll. 207-208 f.

²Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 40, 43, 44, 46.

³Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 267, l. 32. Rogers, op. cit., p. 189, l. 11; D. D. Luckenbill, op. cit., I, p. 296.

⁴Luckenbill, op. cit., I, 296; II, 5. Martin, op. cit., p. 220, ll. 7, 11; p. 224, ll. 7, 16; Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, p. 43, l. 18: "Bel with sceptre of distant days exalts thy hand over the land." See also Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, l. 38.

⁵Ex. 9:29, 33.

⁶Ex. 17:11 ff.

lifting the hands to him.¹

It is further evident both in the nature-cult literature and in the Old Testament that the lowering of the hand meant impending evil.² In the New Year ritual at Babylon Belit is spoken of as one "who smites the enemy, not fearing her sovereignty."³ Tammuz is called "him who his fettered hands cannot raise."⁴ The lowering of the hand or smiting with the rod brought plagues on Pharaoh.⁵ When Moses failed to hold up his hand during the war between the Amalekites and the Hebrews, it went hard with the Hebrews.⁶

Of such magic usage Isaiah was aware in his day. An illustration of his reference to the nature-cult magic motions purported to avert evil is in Isaiah 30:28 b and 32 a, referred to above.⁷ Here Yahweh is pictured as indulging in a few magic motions of his own as a figure of his control of the nations and his ability to bring to an end the imperialism of Assyria. The king of Assyria will employ against Yahweh's power the nature-cult machinations⁸ but when the descent of Yahweh's arm takes place⁹ the

¹Cf. Ps. 28:2; 44:21; 63:4; 68:32; 134:2; Lev. 9:22; Lam. 2:19; I Kgs. 8:38-39; Jer. 7:16; 11:14; Ex. 9:29.

²Cf. H. Gressmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 125-127.

³Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 135, l. 260.

⁴His inability to raise his hands for favor evidently kept him without power. Cf. H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns and Prayers to the God Dumuzi, p. 62.

⁵Ex. 7:17; 8:5-6, 17; 9:15; 10:12-13.

⁶Ex. 17:11-12.

⁷See translation and interpretation above, pp. 75-76 f.

⁸Is. 30:32 b.

⁹Is. 30:30.

king will come to his end.¹ It is as if the prophet had remarked that since the people believe in the efficacy of nature-cult ritual motions as guaranteeing desired results, perhaps they will believe in Yahweh when they see the results of his activity. This is not to imply that Isaiah shared the belief in the control of the future by ritualistic motions. His denunciation of belief in the efficacy of ritual in Isaiah 1:11 f. precludes that. He simply adopted as an effective means of combating another philosophy of life the terms used by it in order to show the real inadequacy of its concepts.

An example of the popular conception that "spreading out the hands" to deity implied a favorable answer is furnished in Isaiah 37:4 (II Kings 19:4) where it is recorded that Hezekiah besought Isaiah "to lift up" his prayer and in Isaiah 37:14 (II Kings 19:14) where the king himself "spread" the message received from the Assyrian king before Yahweh. The same faith in these motions is implied in Isaiah 1:15 where, in contrast with the popular expectation that ritual will bring favor from Yahweh, Isaiah as the representative of his God exclaims: "In your spreading forth of hands I will hide my eyes from you; also when you increase prayer, hearing is not to me." The contrast with the nature-cult statement, "When you raise your hands to the gods, they will hear your prayer"² is to be noted. This statement of the prophet and the other allusions to nature-cult ritual which he condemns as ineffectual in Isaiah 1:13-15³ show that he was plainly saying to his contemporaries: "Yahweh is a different kind

¹Is. 30:33.

²D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, I, 296.

³See p. 62 above.

of deity from that which your ritual implies. You think the same tactics will get results from him as you believe will get them from your deities. Well, that is not so." In the following few verses, then, Isaiah indicates that Yahweh's favor may be gained only through moral living.¹

Of especial interest also in Isaiah are the numerous passages referring to the outstretching of Yahweh's hand presaging punishment in the form of ill fortune to follow upon evil deeds. One expression, "In spite of all this, his anger has not turned back, and his hand is still extended," recurs again and again.² It has usually therefore been considered to be a refrain of a poem, dismembered by editorial activity. While this is possibly correct, since 5:25 is the only occurrence of this phrase removed from the main section 9:7-10:4, yet it appears equally or even more probable that this is a parody on a current phrase, repeated by Isaiah in his usual sarcastic tone against the dominant cultus. It is to be noted that in all cases this phrase follows on a denunciation of wickedness and evil practices current in Isaiah's day. It is equivalent to saying: "Even the evil which has come to pass or is predicted is not the end of trials."

It is well known that the nature-cult philosophy viewed any calamity as being only temporary and of short duration.³ Many are the cries of the nature-cult literature for "the appeasing of the heart of the gods,"⁴ the implication being that all suffering was due to the anger of the deity and would cease

¹Is. 1:16-20.

²Is. 9:11, 16, 20; 10:4; 5:25.

³Cf. p. 25 f. above.

⁴Cf., e.g., Rogers, Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament, p. 128, ll. 15-17; p. 156, l. 45; p. 157, l. 51; p. 159, ll. 91-94; p. 163, ll. 5-8; p. 164, ll. 9-17.

if one were able to discover the irritating omission or failure on the part of the suffering one. But the anger was conceived to be arbitrary, and the curing of the situation depended on a magic to please the deity and turn back his wrath. In contrast, Isaiah is saying: Yahweh is not easily cajoled into favorable attitude; his anger continues until there is a change of conduct. In chapter 5 the phrase follows directly upon a denunciation of intemperance, corruption in courts, and injustice.¹ In 9:11, it follows a denunciation of pride and arrogance on the part of Israel. In 9:16 the refrain completes a denunciation of leaders who cause the people to do wrong by making them believe untruths. In 9:20 indignation of Yahweh is against the people because of the wickedness of unbrotherly treatment.² In 10:4 the phrase follows outcry against rulers and judges who rob the poor. In each case the prophet speaks of suffering as the result of the conditions and concludes with the idea that there is still reason for concern because anger still burns.

The very word used of the anger, that "it is not turned back [נָשָׁב]," and the parallelism of "his hand is still extended [נָטָה יָדוֹ]" indicates the dependence of this phrase upon a supporting social psychology which believed in a magical conception of anger as an entity that might be projected upon a people. So long as the curse was on, suffering would follow. The prophet has used a current conception to deny by implication its essential meaning, saying in effect: For the removal of Yahweh's wrath, moral conduct is necessary; distress indicates not a mere arbitrary whim of deity, but the necessity of socially motivated conduct. Suffering will continue until conditions are corrected.

¹Vss. 22-23.

²Vs. 18 b.

In 10:5 ff. the people are encouraged to view the Assyrian dominance as under the control of Yahweh. When Yahweh has accomplished by means of Assyria what he has purposed for the good of Judah, then Assyria will be destroyed. In verses 24 and 26 the people are urged not to despair in spite of what appear to be magical machinations of Assyrian king against them.¹ In 14:26-27 Yahweh is said to have "stretched out his hand" irrevocably against Assyria.

In 10:24 ff. the people are enjoined not to despair if Assyria "lifts up [X Ū ']" upon them the rod "after the manner [fashion, way] of Egypt." In striking contrast to the dread of Judah of this symbolic cursing of the Egyptian sort, we find that Isaiah 19:16 says that Egypt shall fear because of the waving (𐤏 𐤍 𐤏 𐤏)² of the hand of Yahweh. In Isaiah 23:11, a similar reference is made to the destruction of the merchant peoples round about Tyre.

In all these passages the prophet is apparently using a current belief in the magic of casting spells to combat the philosophy behind it and to make an effective appeal to the common people.

The word X Ū 𐤏 used so frequently in the introduction of prophetic messages dealing with foreign powers in Isaiah³ is interesting as possibly associated with the nature-cult "prayers of the lifting of the hand." This Hebrew derivative of X Ū 𐤏 recalls the fact that the Assyrian nāṣu is the usual word employed

¹Is. 10:26, 32.

²Cf. connection of this root with fertility rites, p. 76, n. 1 above. Also see Prov. 7:17; Lev. 23:11.

³Is. 13:1; 14:28; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 22:1; 23:1; 30:6. Also Is. 21:1, 11.

in the "lifting-of-the-hand" ceremonies,¹ which, as we have seen above, were those to bring about the favorable turn of events. A further hint that this is correct is furnished by Ps. 141:2 where נָשָׂא is used to parallel הִנָּחֵם .

Yet the usage in Isaiah is always in connection with prophecy of destruction, and the word is usually translated as "burden," "oracle against" the various nations. Study of the root nāṣu in the Assyrian reveals that the word is very frequently used in contracts or bargains with a meaning "to bear responsibility," while it is often also used with the meaning "to lift up." The Assyrian dictionary file at the University of Chicago also contains instances of its use as "bring" and "take away." These usages are likewise vouched for by Brown, Driver and Briggs² for the Hebrew root נָסָא .

The probability that we are dealing with a root that has a double meaning, as is common in Hebrew,³ is made certain by the usage of the very word נָשָׂא in both a favorable and unfavorable sense in Jeremiah 23:33-40. After characterizing those prophets who teach falsely as continually saying, "Ye shall have peace [prosperity]" and "No evil shall come upon you,"⁴ Jeremiah says that Yahweh has said, when any one asks what the נָשָׂא of

¹Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 111, ll. 17, 20; p. 119, l. 31; p. 120, ll. 7-8; p. 133, ll. 207-208; p. 134, l. 220; p. 136, ll. 282-283; pp. 220, ll. 7, 11; p. 224, ll. 7, 16. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 189, l. 11; p. 174, l. 79; p. 147, l. 49. Langdon, *Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms*, p. 267, l. 32; Vanderburgh, *Sumerian Hymns*, p. 15.

²Cf. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), *ad loc.*

³E.g., בָּרַךְ "to bless" or "to curse"; כָּבֵד "to be heavy" "to sink down," "to burden," or "to honor," "to be high"; פָּקַד "to visit" either for good or ill; כָּלַף "to perfect," or "to annihilate."

⁴Jer. 23:17.

Yahweh is, he shall reply, "What אֲשׁוּר ?" Denunciation is pronounced upon them for "changing" or perverting the word of Yahweh.

It appears, then, that the word אֲשׁוּר among the masses carried the implication of a favorable turn of events, while for Isaiah it meant destruction and distress. His use of the word in the "oracles" such as Is. 14:28; 17:1; 19:1; 22:1; 23:1; 30:6 and possibly in 15:1 may then be a sarcastic pun levelled at fear of or faith in surrounding nations whose basic trust was in the materialism of the nature cults. The "lifting up" of a prophetic word concerning them meant their downfall under the "burden" of the hand of Yahweh.¹ The use of הָאֲשׁוּרִים in Isaiah 30:27 as "heavy with portent" is proof of this attitude on the part of Isaiah.

In this way Isaiah infused new meaning into an old pattern.

אֲשׁוּר , instead of being a favorable prophecy, "a lifting-up," came under his treatment to mean a message of doom, "a cracking-down," and the "stretching out of the hand" became an omen of destruction for unrighteousness rather than efficacious magic for prosperity.

(k) Cult Figures

The Almah.—The usage of the same word as employed in Isaiah 7:14 in the Ras Shamra ritual makes it practically certain that this was a technical designation for women who engaged in the fertility rites symbolizing the marriage of the god and goddess.² The reference to the הַאֲמָה and her son, בֶּן־אֲחָז as King Ahaz'

¹Cf., e.g., Is. 23:11.

²First noted by Dr. W. C. Graham. Cf. his "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L, 207, 210. Cf. also Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 42, 45, 49. See also Ps. 68:26; Cant. 1:3; 6:8.

omens of a prosperous future is a sarcastic one. Before there is time for the invoking of the ritual of the cult woman and her sacred offspring who is to choose the good for the nation, the immediate danger from Syria and Ephraim will be over favorably. As for the more remote future, Assyria, the source of the king's hoped-for aid, will bring destruction instead of help. Ahaz' "sign" of the 𐤀𐤓𐤕 and her prosperity-bringing son will thereby be proved to have no efficacy either for the immediate situation or for the ultimate welfare of Judah. Thus the prophet denies the importance to the nation of the king's messianic function and of the supporting ritual and philosophy of life.

Mot and Shahr.—Both deities are mentioned in the Ras Shamra ritual.¹ Mot unseats Alein-Baal and causes his departure to the underworld.² Anath seeks him, and he is finally restored to his throne, and Mot is vanquished.³ Shahr with Shelem is a twin, born to El through the ritual intercourse,⁴ although Mot thinks he is born to him, and he presages the return of fertility and prosperity to the earth.

The reference in Isaiah 28:15, 18 necessitates a translation as Mot⁵ and is evidently a direct reference to the underworld deity mentioned in the Ras Shamra ritual.⁶ Here the prophet indicates outright that trafficking with the dead god is of

¹Mot: Syria, XII, Pl. XXXVIII, ll. 25, 31. Shahr: Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, l. 53.

²Syria, XII, Pl. XLII, ll. 1-28.

³Syria, XII, Pl. XL and XLI, ll. 1-49; Pl. XXXIX, ll. 1-36.

⁴Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, l. 53.

⁵Cf. translation on pp. 52-53. Cf. discussion, p. 53 f.; also p. 52, n. 1.

⁶Cf. p. 52, n. 1.

no significance. Yahweh is bringing destruction (evidently at the hands of Assyria) no matter what nature-cult ritual is engaged in.

The references to מוֹת in Isaiah 38:1 a and 38:18 gain in significance by translation as references to the underworld deity.¹ The first probably indicates that Hezekiah functioned in the ritual as the object of Mot's activity in an attempt to avert calamity from the nation and to secure a favorable outcome in the Sennacherib campaign versus Judah. If so, it is of prime importance as indicating the dominance of the nature-cult philosophy. The second records that "Sheol doth not give thanks to thee, nor Mot praise thee." This corroborates the attitude shown by Mot in the Ras Shamra ritual, and is one more bit of evidence that the poem in Isaiah 38:9-20 is an adapted liturgy relating to the death of the nature deity.

In Isaiah 8:21, the term שָׁחַר apparently refers to the king (presumably Ahaz) for whom there is no prosperity-bringing deity.² Trust in the nature-cult deities has involved Judah in a political and economic and moral situation in which there is no hope. The king's magic does not function.

This interpretation has to recommend it not only the authenticity of great clarity but also that of interpretation in line with the long-recognized general sense of the passage.

Isaiah 14:12, a passage obviously later than Isaiah's time, if translated "How art thou fallen, O Howler, Shāḥar!" has all the sarcastic flavor of Isaiah's attitude toward the nature cultus. The great Babylonian king, the touted Shāḥar or

¹Cf. pp. 36 ff.

²This is apparent, even if שָׁחַר be translated merely "dawn."

Prosperity-Bringer, has fallen on evil days. The birth of Shagar in the cult ceremonies gave the worshippers assurance of the king's continuing prosperity-bringing powers. Here, as in the case of Ahaz, the king's messianic function has come to an end.

The Healer.—Many of the ancient healing deities were those of the nature religions. In a Sumerian liturgical hymn of the Tammuz cult, published by S. H. Langdon,¹ Tammuz is named "healer." Still another calls him "the lord of healing."² Again he is said to be "lord of the name of life."³ His sister seeks him "to restore the wasting" of the ewe and goat.⁴

The belief in the magical powers of the leader as "healer" in Judah is mentioned by Isaiah in 3:6-7:

6. When a man seizes his brother at the house of his father: [saying] "Clothing is to thee; decider []'šp] shalt thou be for us; and this ruin [shall be] under thy hand,"
7. In that day he shall lift up [his voice?] saying, "I will not be a 'healer' []'šp], for in my house is neither bread nor clothing; ye shall not make me a decider []'šp] of the people."

This passage reflects a time of great crisis in Judah. In leadership there is a famine as well as in bread. All the ordinary leaders whose function was to guarantee national and community safety are seen by the people to have no power. Things are in such a state that any man, even one's own brother, who has food and clothing for himself is looked on as necessarily having magical powers, to the extent that people in their frantic need are willing to exalt him to the position of decider (]'šp)

¹Cf. his Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, p. 287.

²Rogers, op. cit., pp. 179, 180-181.

³J. D. Prince, "Hymns to Tammuz," AJSL, XXVII, 84.

⁴F. A. Vanderburgh, "Babylonian Tammuz Lamentations," AJSL, XXVII, 318.

for them. Because he has a living, reason the people who believe in the magic of a prosperity-bringer as a solution to their difficulties, he must have the divine secret of production and be able to save them in the famine. But the crisis is so bad that such a responsibility makes no appeal to the common man selected, for he realizes his inability to satisfy the needs of the people and that he will be doubtless treated violently when it is discovered that he cannot bring about the salvation of his people.

The prophet here gives a picture of the dire situation into which the trust of the people in the magical powers of the leaders has placed them,--a situation where the fallacy of the supporting ritual and philosophy is evident even to its own ardent devotees.

We have earlier noted¹ that in Isaiah 30:26 the word **חבן**, used here as "healer," parallels **אפר**, and have seen that both words have cultic connections.² With the "healer" the **ישר** is equated in this passage. In the enigmatic passage, Isaiah 22:3 and in Isaiah 1:10, as well as in Micah 3:1, the usage of this word bears out the interpretation: "persons responsible for the welfare of society through their office." Brown, Driver and Briggs link this word with the Arabic **قضى**, "to decide judicially, to decree."³ This calls to mind that in the Babylonian New Year ritual the king was significant in the "deciding of the fates for the next year,"⁴ being smitten on the cheek. If the tears came, the next year would be prosperous. If they did not,

¹Cf. p. 31 f.

²Cf. nn. 2, 3, p. 32.

³Cf. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, ad. loc.

⁴Cf. Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., pp. 144-146.

ill fortune would follow. In a passage full of cult imagery this very practice seems to be referred to in Micah 4:14 b: "With the rod they shall smite upon the cheek of the judge [ܕܢܝܢ] of Israel."

We learn from Micah 3:1 that a ܝܫܝܐ was one of whom it might be said: "Is it not to you to know the decision [ܕܥܩܪܐ]?" The use of ܕܥܩܪܐ in the sense of "making a decision" is well attested.¹ In the Ras Shamra ritual Alein-Baal is called the shft (deliverer, judge), and it is very evident that he was the bringer of fertility and prosperity.² Still further we note in the liturgy of Ishme-Dagan that, following an appeal for wealth and increase of produce, the king is spoken of as "judge, giver of decision" under the authority of the sun-god.³

When all these facts are considered, it seems to establish beyond doubt the magical significance of the ruler. Isaiah here flatly denies its efficacy and indicates that at least eventually the people will recognize that they have done evil and not good to themselves by their trust in such folly.⁴

The Hero.—As we have earlier shown, in the Hebrew ritual the king represented the savior function of the god of fertility who guaranteed the prosperity of the nation.⁵ He thus became the

¹Cf. Is. 5:3; 33:22; I Kgs. 3:28; Deut. 1:17; 17:8; Mal. 2:17; Num. 27:21; II Sam. 15:2-6; Ps. 122:5; Mic. 4:14. See also Is. 2:4; 16:5.

²Cf. Syria, XIII, Pl. XXVI, ll. 43-44. Note also use of shft = "sovereignty" or "authority": Syria, XII, Pl. XLIII, 1. 29.

³Cf. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgical Texts, pp. 143-148.

⁴Cf. Is. 3:9-11.

⁵Cf. Ps. 2:6-8; 45:4 f.; 72:1 ff.; 132:12-18; I Kgs. 9:4-8; Judg. 9:15; Is. 32:1-2; 37:1, 14; 38:16; 8:21. Cf. W.C. Graham, "Recent Light on the Cultural Origins of the Hebrews," JR, XIV, 326. H. Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-judischen Eschatologie, pp. 281-282. A. R. Johnson, op. cit., p. 73 ff.

Hero of his people.¹

Tammuz, known as the Hero, was slain, bringing prosperity by his return thereafter to the land of the living.² It is therefore very natural that in opposing nature religion Isaiah should have said that the Hero (Tammuz) of the people should indeed be of no avail in his function.³

Use of the same figure is seen in Isaiah 9:6-7 where לְהוֹרֵא^4 is an expression for the supremacy of Yahweh. This furnishes a striking illustration of the infusion of new meaning into old concepts. Here the name of the hoped-for king is to be Wonder-Counsellor, El-Hero, Father-Eternal, Prince-Shalom. He is to rule in justice and righteousness through the power of Yahweh. Thus is introduced into a naturalistic concept of arbitrary deity a moralistic tone. The righteousness and justice of coming king are the means of his becoming the savior of his people due to the power of Yahweh.

The Cult Children.-The importance of the offspring of the

¹Ps. 45:4-7; 89:20 ff. The healing function of the king's duty is very similar to that of the Hero. Cf. The Healer above.

²Hero was the very common designation of Tammuz. Cf. R. W. Rogers, op. cit., pp. 180, 183, 184, 179. F. A. Vanderburgh, Sumerian Hymns, pp. 11-12. H. Radau, Sumerian Hymns and Prayers to the God Dumu-zī, p. 45. S. H. Langdon, Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms, pp. 287, 308.

³Cf. Is. 3:25, discussed above, pp. 86-87. Presumably the "Heroes" are the cultic figures who impersonate the "beautiful son." Cf. Cant. 3:6-8.

⁴Cf. Is. 9:5; 10:21. It has been common for scholars to regard Isaiah 9:1-6 as a late passage. Whoever the author, this passage expresses a natural desire for a king to be the embodiment of loyalty to Yahwism. The similarity of לְהוֹרֵא here to the Ras Shamra "El, Father of Years" is noteworthy, as is that of Shelem, born of El's union with the 'almah at the shrine, quite literally - Prince of Prosperity. The function of counseling or deciding for prosperity was certainly that of the fertility deities. Cf. Syria, XIV, p. 135, l. 51 ff. Also see Syria, XIII, p. 132, l. 24; XII, p. 195, l. 8. Also see Deut. 10:17; Ps. 45:4; 89:20; Neh. 9:32; Jer. 32:18.

sacred marriage for the return of fertility to the earth is evident in the Ras Shamra ritual. It is the birth of the gracious gods to the cult women that Mot regards as the guarantee of the continuation of his rule but that really presages the return to power of Alein-Baal.¹

It is apparently in this same expectation that Ahaz awaits the birth of the child Immanu-El to the $\eta \eta \eta \eta$ ² as the guarantee of the favor of El to Judah. A most convincing interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 regards Immanu-El as a child born through the participation of the king in the rite of the divine marriage of the god and goddess.³ Isaiah asserts that before the child shall be even old enough to function in the ritual determination of the fate of the people the crisis will have terminated favorably but that later real distress will be theirs from Assyria. He as Yahweh's representative, unable to prevent Ahaz' policy of alliance with Assyria from fruition, attempts to establish beyond question the idea that Yahweh is the true source of the nation's welfare by showing his knowledge of and control over the outcome of the nation's fate.

Not content with a sarcastic reference to the inefficacy of the nature-cult ritual, Isaiah, apparently as a definite rebuke to the false optimism of the nature-cult devotees, had relations with "the prophetess," probably a cult woman,⁴ designating that

¹Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 39-61.

²This is apparently the designation of the office of the women in the Ras Shamra ritual. Cf. Syria, XIV, Pl. XIX, ll. 42, 45-46, 47-49.

³Cf. W. C. Graham, AJSL, L, 207 ff. The Ras Shamra tablets suggest that the El religion is of native Canaanite origin. Cf. also H. Gressmann, op. cit., pp. 281-282.

⁴Gray's argument (Isaiah, I, p. 144) that the prophetess was the wife of Isaiah, using $\eta \eta \eta \eta$ as an analogy, is not forceful, for even $\eta \eta \eta \eta$ is primarily a professional designation. Cf. H. G. May, AJSL, XLVIII, p. 87, n. 4.

the child born should be given the name, מְהֵרָה-שָׁלֵל-טָב ז
 "Speedy doom, hasty destruction." Thus the practice by the nature devotees of ritual sex relations, the offspring of which were thought to presage prosperity and good fortune, was satirized and used as a foil by Isaiah in order to show the folly of such dependence on ritualistic magic.¹ It is hard to imagine a more dramatic way of criticizing the current philosophy, especially if we remember the magical significance attached to names by the common people.² It was a terrific and graphic blow at the essential materialism current in the prophet's day.

The reference to the rule of women and children in Judah in Isaiah 3:4 and 12 may likewise be an expression of sarcasm aimed at the popular faith in the significance of the offspring of the fertility rites.³

In summary it may be said that Isaiah took his favorite ironical attitude toward the cultus offspring, and evidently felt that the first requisite for any real understanding of life and its complex problems was to be weaned away from trust in a ritualistic magic and the materialistic philosophy of the nature cults.

¹Cf. discussion of Isaiah 7:15, 22 under Cult Food, p. 78 f.

²Cf. Ex. 23:13; Hos. 2:19; Deut. 18:20; Ps. 16:4; Josh. 23:7; Lev. 24:11.

³Cf. W. C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L, p. 209, n. 9.

